TAI - PAN

A Final Draft Screenplay

by

George MacDonald Fraser

MAIN TITLES

Second Draft	- December, 1978
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5th Revision (reduction)	- February, 1980

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1 EXT. OPEN SEA OFF HONG KONG DAY 1

From side to side of the screen, a high green sea running, big waves swelling, spray lashing off the crests. The shriek of the wind and the hiss of the spray is heard.

Two great clipper ships, heeled over with all canvas spread, are driving through the water. Slightly ahead is the White Witch with China Cloud thrashing along on her quarter. White Witch comes surging past the CAMERA and China Cloud is seen through the spray as she plunges in pursuit.

CUT TO

MS along China Cloud's yardarm, where half a dozen drenched SEAMEN, standing on the foot rope, are leaning over the yard reefing a topsail in the howling wind. The noise of the weather is deafening as the CAMERA TILTS to look down the mast at deck and sea far below.

CUT TO

CS of White Witch's bow, head on, the spray cascading up over her figurehead (a flying White Witch)

CUT TO

CS of China Cloud's figurehead dipping into waves (a Chinese dragon head). On her bowsprit a SEAMAN is clinging for dear life, hanging back down above the sea as he secures a line.

CUT TO

SHOT of both ships driving into CAMERA, White Witch still leading. Both ships fly the Union Jack astern, the White Witch carries BROCK's house flag (a badger) at her peak; at the peak of China Cloud is the flag of the Noble House, a Chinese Dragon with a Scottish lion rampant.

CUT TO

2 EXT. QUARTER DECK OF WHITE WITCH DAY 2

On the tilting deck stands BROCK, massive and bearded, hands driven into pockets, pilot cap jammed on head, intent on the racé. He glances back at China Cloud without emotion. Beside him his son GORTH, clinging to a line to keep his balance, staring anxiously at the cloud of canvas overhead. Two men are fighting to keep the wheel steady; the noise of the gale is terrific.

2 Continued 2

GORTH
(yelling)
Dad! Dad! Take in a reef!
We'll lose the bloody topmast!

BROCK, staring intently ahead, ignores him, then barks an order to the MEN at the wheel.

BROCK
Starboard half a point.

As GORTH prepares to protest.

Reef be buggered. We've got
him beat! The bastard's beat!

GORTH stares at him, then back at China Cloud, a bare fifty yards behind.

CUT TO

DOWNWARD SHOT of White Witch's deck, past billowing canvas. Groaning and creaking of strained cordage and timber as the clipper surges along.

CUT TO

3 EXT. OPEN SEA DAY 3

Side view of the ships, racing past a high rocky shore. They are about to pass a promontory beyond which lies harbour.

CUT TO

4 EXT. QUARTER DECK OF CHINA CLOUD DAY 4

Two men wrestling with the wheel, directed by the hunchback Captain, ORLOV. Beside him, ROBB, gritting his teeth in frustration, trembling with impatience.

CUT TO

LS down the deck, SEAMEN tailing on to a rope, BOSUN McKAY yelling orders above the wind, SEAMEN scurrying aloft to the blast of his whistle. Just ahead, the stern of the White Witch as she drives for the point.

CUT TO

ROBB and ORLOV by the wheel.

4 Continued 4

ROBB
(to no one in particular)
Come on, come on! That's ten thousand pounds we're losing! Damnation!

ORLOV shrugs as ROBB stamps away. ORLOV glances up at the sails, walks easily aft across the tilting deck, advancing into CAMERA, finally addressing it, shaking his head.

ORLOV
I'm sorry, Tai-pan. We're carrying every stitch we can. He has the legs of us.

CUT TO

CS of STRUAN, his back to the stern rail. Our first view of him: a tall figure in a black coat buttoned tight, open at the throat to show a ruffled shirt; he wears a pilot cap. His face is calm, his attitude one of composed patience. He glances aloft. His POV: the huge clouds of canvas overhead. Suddenly, with an explosive crack, a sail splits, the canvas streaming out behind. Panic on the yards, men scrambling in the shrouds, clinging to the footrope as they struggle with the canvas.

CUT TO

5 EXT. QUARTER DECK OF CHINA CLOUD DAY 5

CS of STRUAN, ORLOV staring aloft.

STRUAN
(calmly)
Aye. So he has.

As ORLOV stares aghast.

Don't worry, Orlov. The bet won't come out of your pay.

ORLOV is leaping away across the deck, roaring "Get aloft and cut away that gear! Run, damn you! Hold her steady!" He hurls himself at the wheel to help the SEAMEN as the China Cloud shudders and falls away.

CUT TO

LS of SEAMEN cutting away the ripped sail far overhead.

CUT TO

6 EXT. QUARTER DECK OF WHITE WITCH DAY 6

BROCK still staring ahead, ignoring the exultations of GORTH, who is dancing up and down, pointing back.

GORTH
(delighted)
He's split his tops'l! Ya-hoo! Look at him! Wallowing like a pregnant duck!
(clapping his hands)
We'll be first at the flagpole, Dad! That's ten thousand we'll collect!

BROCK
(glancing briefly back)
I'll be first at the flag-pole. And I'll collect the ten thousand.

CUT TO

7 EXT. OPEN SEA DAY 7

Side view, showing the widened gap between the ships as White Witch clears the point, China Cloud labouring behind, close to the rocky shore.

CUT TO

8 EXT. QUARTER DECK OF CHINA CLOUD DAY 8

ORLOV at the forward rail, bellowing orders. ROBB by the wheel, his face anguished, turning towards his brother.

ORLOV
(roaring)
Tail on and heave! Reef the fore-sail! Mr McKay, get those men aloft!

ROBB
Of all the hellish luck! Brock's luck! Look at him go!

STRUAN is peeling off his coat. He tosses it to ROBB, and throws aside his pilot cap.

STRUAN
I'll see you ashore, Robb.

He swings himself up on the rail, stands poised a moment as ROBB, dumbfounded, starts towards him.

8 Continued 8

ROBB
(horrified)
Dirk! What the hell are you doing, man? Wait, for God's ...

CS STRUAN on rail, looking down. His POV: green water boiling past the racing clipper.

CUT TO

9 EXT. OPEN SEA DAY 9

LS of China Cloud running along the rocky shore as STRUAN dives. He hits the sea. CS of ROBB at the rail staring down.

CUT TO

10 EXT. BEACH DAY 10

Rousing strains of "Hearts of Oak" as a file of red-coated MARINES march in CS into CAMERA and through.
WIDE SHOT of the beach, the flag-pole towering up, SAILORS, and MARINES around it in three sides of a hollow square. A dais, guarded by sentries, is at the foot of the pole. On the open side of the square a fashionable crowd is assembling - traders and their wives, officers, civilians, merchant seamen and Chinese at a respectful distance. Great chatter and bustle as they await the arrival of GOVERNOR LONGSTAFF. Beyond the crowds, the bay, with men-of-war and merchant ships at anchor. The CAMERA takes in the crowd, moving in towards a small group close to the dais -- COOPER, TILLMAN, SHEVAUN, GLESSING. Outside the square long rows of tents, with refreshment tables set out, tended by Chinese servants. There is a holiday atmosphere. The CAMERA closes on the group by the dais.

TILLMAN
(glancing at his watch and up at the Flagpole)
Well, Captain Glessing -- how long do we have to wait?

GLESSING
Until the Governor gets here, Mr Tillman.

TILLMAN
(impatiently)
Well, that's great! Isn't he ever on time?

10 Continued 10

SHEVAUN
Oh, come, uncle ... Governor Longstaff's just won a war and made a treaty with the Chinese. He must be a little out of breath.

TILLMAN
Huh! A war to force the Chinese to buy British opium, whether they like it or not.

GLESSING
Oh, they like it, Mr Tillman. Who should know that better than you Americans, who have been obligingly running our opium cargoes into Canton during the hostilities -- for the usual percentage, of course?

COOPER
And now the war's over, you'll be taking back your opium trade.

GLESSING
Not my opium trade, Mr Cooper, Neither the Royal Navy nor the British Government smuggles drugs.

COOPER
No, but your dam' traders do. Men like Brock and Dirk Struan. And you don't lift a finger to stop them. No, sir, you fight their wars for 'em! Don't think I don't know -- this China war was Struan's idea. Using the British Navy to smooth the way for him and the rest of the opium-runners. Oh, and you're glad to do it -- it means you can steal another island for Queen Victoria.

GLESSING
How's the price of slaves at New Orleans these days, Mr Tillman? Or is that a respectable business compared with opium?

10 Continued 10

TILLMAN glares, COOPER grins, SHEVAUN laughs outright. The CAMERA pans away from them to the expectant crowd, CLOSING on BROCK and GORTH who are pushing through to get to the flagpole. BROCK halts at the front of the crowd, staring at the bare pole with satisfaction. GORTH is gloating beside him.

GORTH
There she is, Dad! Just think --- lay your finger on it, and you're ten thousand pounds richer!

BROCK
(unsmiling)
Nay -- Dirk Struan's ten thousand pounds poorer.

CUT TO

CS of flagpole, filling centre of screen. Beyond it, in front of the crowd, BROCK is walking forward deliberately towards it. GLESSING, frowning, moves to intercept him.

GLESSING
(sharply)
One moment, Mr Brock, if you please! This space is reserved for the Governor's party --

BROCK
(glancing at him without breaking stride)
Go to hell.

BROCK is approaching the pole, preparing to reach out, when a hand and arm come into CAMERA, touching the pole. BROCK stops, frozen, glaring in disbelief.

BROCK
You! You Scotch bastard!
(his voice rising to a shout)
How the hell did you get here?

CUT TO

CS of STRUAN, leaning a hand easily on the pole. Sea water has soaked his hair and fine ruffled shirt. He smiles calmly at BROCK.

STRUAN
The same way you did. By sea.

10 Continued 10

BROCK looks fit to burst. Behind him GORTH stands shaken. BROCK recovers and strides furiously up to STRUAN.

BROCK
Damn you! Your bloody ship isn't even at anchor yet! She's floggin' about there wi' a split foresail! I's here first!

STRUAN
(calmly)
Whoever touched the pole first was the winner. I'll touch it again if you like. No? If you haven't got the money on you, I'll take your I.O.U.

And he walks past BROCK towards the crowd, wiping the water from his eyes. BROCK, in sudden rage, reaches for the knife in the back of his belt, whips it out and springs after STRUAN, who turns unhurriedly to face him.

BROCK
(smouldering with fury)
By God! D'you think you can cheat me? D'you think I'll pay?

STRUAN
(glancing down at Brock's knife imperturbably)
If you don't ... you'll lose something a lot more precious than ten thousand pounds.

GORTH
(at his father's elbow)
You dirty son-of-a --

BROCK
(backhanding him fiercely)
Sharrup!

STRUAN
(to Gorth, coldly)
Don't ever call me that, Gorth. You may be your father's son, but by God you're not your father.

He and BROCK stare each other out for a moment, then STRUAN turns and goes to the front of the crowd, where he accepts a coat from a MERCHANT, slings it over his dripping clothes. By the flagpole, BROCK slowly sheaths his knife, GORTH at his elbow. GLESSING paces forward.

10 Continued 10

GLESSING
Ah, how convenient. If you've finished your discussion, Mr Brock, I think His Excellency is approaching.

BROCK and GORTH move towards the crowd as the kettle-drums of the Marine band roll in a general salute. Through an avenue in the crowd LONGSTAFF, accompanied by a couple of aides, and a Marine guard behind, approaches, smiling and raising his tall hat as the ladies curtsey and the men uncover. The band plays a slow march as he ascends the dais, turns to face the crowd, flanked by his aides, with the Marines forming ranks either side of the dais.

GLESSING, at LONGSTAFF's elbow, hands him a scroll, which LONGSTAFF opens. Two SEAMEN stand ready to hoist the flag. CS of LONGSTAFF and GLESSING, LONGSTAFF frowning at the scroll.

LONGSTAFF
(whispering)
How do we pronounce it? Hiang-Kiang...?

GLESSING whispers. There is a roll on the drums, and in the silence LONGSTAFF reads aloud:

LONGSTAFF
In accordance with the treaty of Chuen-pi signed by me, William Longstaff, Her Majesty's Superintendent of Trade and Governor, and by the plenipotentiary of His Majesty Tao Kuang, Emperor of China, I hereby take possession, on this 26th Day of January, in the Year of Our Lord eighteen hundred and forty-one, in the name of Her Britannic Majesty, of this island of Hong Kong ...

CUT TO

STRUAN, listening intently as LONGSTAFF's voice drones on inaudibly. It is the face of a man inwardly exultant, but not showing it; only the eyes have the fierce subdued gleam of satisfaction as he listens. Beside him BROCK, scowling, glances slowly at him and away again.

BROCK
(growling softly)
Island of Hong Kong my backside. A measly fly-dropping in the China Sea. What's it good for? What's it worth? And we fought a bloody war for it!
(spits in disgust)

10 Continued 10

STRUAN
(softly)
It would have been worth a dozen wars.

BROCK
Who to, for Christ's sake?

STRUAN
(after a moment's pause)
To me.

CAMERA PANS away from them along the crowd -- traders and soldiers, then TILLMAN, SHEVAUN, and COOPER, MRS BROCK and TESS; then faces -- a Chinese coolie; a British sailor in straw hat; a very old Chinese merchant in whiskers and pigtail; a big seaman with brass rings in his ears and scarf round his head, chewing tobacco; GORDON CHEN looking eager; STRUAN listening; a Malay sailor in scarf and sarong; a Marine, red-faced at attention, and finally LONGSTAFF himself. During this SHOT we have heard his voice over:

LONGSTAFF (V.O.)
... and further to this treaty, it is agreed that those merchants, British, American, and of other nationalities whatsoever, shall be permitted to return to the Settlement at Canton, there to continue lawful trade with the subjects of the Chinese Emperor, and at no other places on the mainland of China ...

CUT TO

BROCK and STRUAN

BROCK
(disgusted, whispering)
Bloody nonsense! We can trade at Canton and nowhere else -- we should have used this war to make the yellow devils open up free ports to us along the whole coast. What have we got out of it -- this stinking rock! We don't even need it; we've got a safe harbour at Macao.

STRUAN
Hong Kong'll be better than Macao.

Background voice over material for LONGSTAFF in Scene 10, page 9. He will be reading this as an indistinct background noise while BROCK and STRUAN exchange their dialogue at the top of Page 9..

LONGSTAFF (V.O.)
... which island shall be held in perpetuity by Her Majesty's heirs and successors forever, without let or hindrance, and shall remain, under British suzerainty, a free port for the flags of all nations in which to harbour, trade, and enjoy the protection of Her Majesty in the pursuance of their peaceful and lawful occasions, subject only to such provisions and enactments as Her Majesty's Ministers may see fit to embody in acts of Parliament ... "

(This can be cut off where necessary, as soon as BROCK and STRUAN have finished, and LONGSTAFF then continues V.O. with the material at the middle of Page 10, while the CAMERA PANS along the faces in the crowd)

10 Continued 10

BROCK
What the hell for? It's got no streams, no fields, no pasture. Every damned supply'll have to come in by sea. Think o' the cost! And I'll bet the fishing's rotten. What's it got, apart from rocks an' sand?

STRUAN
It's got the safest anchorage in the Orient. And ... it's a stepping-stone, in the China Sea..

CUT TO

LONGSTAFF, rolling up his scroll, removing his hat.

LONGSTAFF
This island of Hong Kong is now British soil. God save the Queen!

As the crowd echoes "God Save the Queen",

CUT TO

MARINE BANDMASTER flourishing his baton as the band strikes up "Rule, Britannia". MS of SEAMEN running up the Union Jack, which flutters at the head of the pole.

CUT TO

STRUAN and BROCK watching the flag.

STRUAN
(almost to himself, his thoughts far away)
"Enemy in sight ... fire as your guns bear ... close up ... "
(to Brock, without looking at him)
Remember the signals?

BROCK
Aye.
(grimly)
That were a long time ago. I didn't owe thee ten thousand quid then.

STRUAN
So you're going to pay?

10 Continued 10

BROCK
Oh, aye, I'll pay thee, Struan.
And not just in money.

As the music ends, and the three cheers are given, the crowd relaxing into talk and laughter, BROCK and STRUAN turn to look at each other for a long moment.

STRUAN
Whenever you're ready.

He turns away. BROCK looks after him, hating him.

CUT TO

11 EXT. DAIS AND ROW OF TENTS DAY 11

STRUAN is approaching the dais, where LONGSTAFF is receiving congratulations from prominent citizens. With him COLONEL STANLEY and GLESSING. In this scene STRUAN, after talking to LONGSTAFF, will saunter along the line of tents and refreshment tables, meeting various principals in the story -- a continuous progress for scene-setting, atmosphere and plot. It should be full of colour and movement, with side-shows, Punch-and-Judy, Chinese acrobats, vendors, etc., as background. It will be a brisk progress, with the exchanges quick and to the point.

LONGSTAFF
(airily as Struan bows)
Ah, good morning, Dirk. I noticed your unconventional arrival.
(making introductions)
Allow me to present Colonel Stanley, who will command our Hong Kong garrison. Colonel -- Mr Dirk Struan, Tai-pan of the Noble House.

STANLEY and STRUAN exchange slight bows.

STANLEY
That's an imposing title. What's it mean?

LONGSTAFF
Tai-pan? Oh ... eh ... Supreme Person, isn't it, Dirk? The Great Man, I suppose, what?

STRUAN
(smiling)
After Your Excellency.

11 Continued 11

LONGSTAFF
(with a slightly jaundiced smile)
Mm ... yes. My Excellency may represent the Queen, but I don't own twenty clipper ships and control the richest trading company in the Orient.
And I don't have a dozen members of Parliament in my pocket, either.
(to Stanley)
I sometimes wonder, Colonel, whether trade follows the flag or vice versa.

STRUAN
Speaking of trade, sir -- when can we go back up-river to Canton?

LONGSTAFF
Oh, I thought in a month or so, perhaps. Give the Chinks time to digest the treaty.

STRUAN
(gently, after a slight pause)
Time lost is money lost. It might be better if we went next week! ... With your Excellency's permission.

LONGSTAFF blinks, but only for a moment. STRUAN regards him deferentially, but there is no doubt whose will is going to prevail. LONGSTAFF shrugs lightly, glancing at GLESSING.

LONGSTAFF
Well, if you think so ... I don't suppose it matters. Will Brock and the other traders be ready?

STRUAN
I'm sure they will be.
(bowing to take his leave)
Excellency -- Colonel -- Captain.

He moves off, GLESSING scowls after him.

GLESSING
Damned impudent pirate.

LONGSTAFF
(his attention elsewhere)
Mm? You know, I was thinking, we could lay out a cricket pitch over there...

CUT TO

12 EXT. BEACH DAY 12

A boat beaching. ROBB springs out, hurries up the beach. CUT to STRUAN, pausing, waving to him. CUT to ROBB, breathless, hurrying up.

ROBB
(calling out)
Don't tell me you made it?

STRUAN
(smiling)
Our account with Brock is improved -- by ten thousand pounds.

ROBB
(fetching up beside him)
Oh, man!
(shaking his head)
Dirk, was it worth the risk?

STRUAN
You've been saying that to me all our lives, wee brother.

He smiles as he lays an arm along ROBB's shoulders and leads him off towards the tents, quoting as he goes:

You know what the poet says:
'He either fears his fate too much
Or his desserts are small
Who dare not put it to the touch
To win or lose it all'.

ROBB
Aye, and you know what happened to that poet -- they hung him.

STRUAN
Anyway, we're going back to Canton next week to start trading again.
(ironically)
I persuaded Governor Longstaff.

ROBB
Thank God for that! This war's been playing the devil with our accounts.

STRUAN
How much cash do we have, Robb?

ROBB
There's a million in the bank in London. Half a million pounds' worth of opium aboard Scarlet Cloud from Calcutta -- but she's two weeks overdue --

12 Continued 12

STRUAN
(pauses, frowning)
Two weeks?

ROBB
But our new clipper, Lotus Cloud, has been sighted; she'll drop anchor this afternoon.

STRUAN
So ... a million in cash. Another half million when Scarlet Cloud arrives. And our debts?

ROBB
(shaking his head)
Nearly a million, borrowed from the East India Company brokers to see us through the war. They'll want their money on the nail next month.

STRUAN
They'll get it. We've always got the bank.

They have arrived at the Noble House's marquee, where TILLMAN, COOPER, and SHEVAUN are already being served with champagne by Chinese servants. As drinks are poured for the brothers, COOPER raises his glass.

COOPER
Well, Tai-pan -- a toast to Britannia's new possession.

TILLMAN
For what it's worth. Your Noble House is going to make its headquarters on this barren rock?

STRUAN
Yes, and if you know what you're doing, you'll buy in.
(raising his glass to Shevaun)
You're looking very lovely today, Miss Shevaun.

SHEVAUN
(pertly)
And the great Tai-pan is looking very wet.

STRUAN
(playfully)
In the glow of your eyes I'm dry already.

12 Continued 12

SHEVAUN
(archly, to Cooper)
You never say things like that.

COOPER
(taking her hand)
A fiance doesn't have to.

SHEVAUN is unimpressed, STRUAN watches in quiet amusement. COOPER holds up his glass.

I must say, the Noble House does things in style. Venetian glass.

STRUAN
Made in Birmingham. A new process. I'll ship as many as you like to Boston. Ten cents American a glass.

COOPER
Ten thousand. Six cents.

ROBB
Ten. Brock'll charge you twelve.

COOPER
Fifteen thousand -- at seven cents.

STRUAN
Done - if you take thirty thousand.

COOPER
Done -- if you'll freight a cargo of cotton on the same ship, from New Orleans to Liverpool.

ROBB
Done - if you'll act as our agent in Boston for this season's tea.

COOPER
Done -- for an extra one per cent.

The bargaining has been quick as lightning, leaving SHEVAUN bewildered by the speed of it.

SHEVAUN
(laughing)
Oh, stop it! You can't possibly remember it all!

STRUAN
(smiling as he moves off)
We'll remember.

12 Continued 12

He turns away and finds himself almost face to face with the REV. HORATIO SINCLAIR and his sister MARY. SINCLAIR a rather gaunt, intense young man, has a possessive interest in his sister, and holds her arm tightly. She would be a beauty if she did not take pains to make herself appear plain -- the demurest of clothes, no make-up. In the brief meeting we are aware of an undercurrent between her and STRUAN, as of some secret shared; his attitude to her is a little too formal and forced.

STRUAN
(bowing politely)
Why, Reverend Sinclair. Miss Mary. I didn't realise you had come up from Macao.

SINCLAIR
My sister and I came to return thanks for God's blessing on our country -- for entrusting yet another benighted place to Christian care. Did we not, my dear?

MARY
(half-smiling at Struan)
Yes, indeed.

STRUAN
(half-smiling in reply)
Glad I'm not alone in regarding Hong Kong as a blessing.

MARY
My brother believes it will be truly blessed when there is a Church here -- and he is preaching in it.

If this is irony it escapes SINCLAIR. STRUAN regards MARY.

STRUAN
Then we'll build him one.
Good day, Miss Mary. Reverend.

He bows and moves on, past ARISTOTLE QUANCE, who is at his easel painting the day's ceremony in oils.

STRUAN
Good day, Mr Quance. Had any champagne, yet?

12 Continued 12

QUANCE
(waving his brush)
Gallons, my dear chap. Delicious. Like Miss Tillman's bosom ... What d'you think?

INSERT SHOT of SHEVAUN, laughing.

STRUAN
(baffled)
Of Miss Tillman's --- ?

QUANCE
(impatiently)
The painting, Tai-pan! Fifty guineas.

STRUAN
(examining it critically)
Twenty. You haven't got me in it.

QUANCE
(eagerly)
Fifty, and I'll paint you in.

STRUAN
(walking on)
Twenty.

QUANCE
(calling after him)
Fifty -- and I'll paint you reading the proclamation!

CUT TO

GORDON CHEN, eagerly watching STRUAN's approach. He is so intent that he bumps into a BRITISH SAILOR, spilling the SAILOR's drink.

SAILOR
(angrily)
Get out of it, you clumsy heathen bastard!

GORDON retreats apologetically, his face impassive. The SAILOR is brushing angrily at himself when he is suddenly swung round by a hand on his shoulder. CS of ORLOV.

ORLOV
(coldly)
If you must insult a heathen bastard, choose some other heathen bastard. That one happens to be <u>his</u> heathen bastard.

12 Continued 12

He jerks his head and the sailor looks. Their POV: GORDON CHEN bowing to STRUAN, who stops to talk to him.

CUT BACK

to SAILOR and ORLOV.

SAILOR
(wide-eyed)
Strewth! Is that a fact? Well, why don't the Chink wear a sign on his chest -- or get his bleedin' hair cut?

CUT TO

STRUAN in conversation with GORDON CHEN, who is straightening up from his formal bow. STRUAN's attitude to him is friendly, but slightly reserved; he is not totally at ease with his Chinese son. GORDON CHEN obviously worships STRUAN, and is distinctly nervous of him; at the same time, there is a secretive intelligence, almost a deviousness, about GORDON, of which STRUAN is occasionally aware, and which he can never reach.

STRUAN
(nodding)
Morning, Gordon.

GORDON
Tai-pan. May I offer humble congratulations on the acquisition of this island?

STRUAN
It's the Queen's island, lad, not mine. But thank you anyway.
(a slight pause)
How's your mother?

GORDON
(eagerly)
Well, thank you, sir. She burns joss sticks in your honour daily.

STRUAN
I haven't seen her ... in many years. Give her ... my good wishes.

GORDON
You do her too much honour, sir.

12 Continued 12

STRUAN
And you? My agent in Macao tells me you're very useful.

GORDON
I hope to be of service to you and to the Noble House, sir.

STRUAN
Good, good. We'll have to find something for you.

GORDON takes this as a dismissal, bows again, and walks quickly away, leaving STRUAN looking thoughtfully after him before resuming his walk.

CUT TO

13 EXT. AERIAL SHOT OF BEACH AND CROWDS DAY 13

The SHOT widens to take in the harbour and crowd, as STRUAN's figure is seen leaving the line of tents, starting to climb the knoll alone. CS of STRUAN as he climbs, reaching the summit and turning to survey the scene. His POV: the crowded beach below, then the harbour with its ships, the headland, the Peak, and across the water the mainland of China. CS of STRUAN, monarch of all he surveys, looking round with dreaming eyes, softly whistling to himself "Come o'er the stream, Cherlie", an old Jacobite song. He is a man content --- for the moment. A distant shout breaks in on him.

ROBB (V.O.)
Tai-pan!

CUT TO

LS of ROBB approaching the foot of the knoll, waving, pointing behind him to the distant headland.

ROBB
(shouting)
It's the new Clipper! Lotus Cloud!

CS of STRUAN, his head lifting eagerly. His POV: the far headland, and standing round it, a great clipper ship, the sun gleaming on her sails. CS of STRUAN gazing at her, then ROBB is panting up beside him.

ROBB
Isn't that the bonny sight!
(frowning)
I just wish it was Scarlet Cloud, with that half million of opium.

13 Continued 13

STRUAN
(with quiet confidence)
Scarlet Cloud'll come.

INSERT BRIEF SHOT of Lotus Cloud

Captain Perry's made good time from England. You go out and meet him, Robb.

ROBB
Aren't you coming?

STRUAN
In a while.

ROBB glances at him, senses his dreaming mood, and glances round at the magnificent view. He smiles.

ROBB
(gently)
Dreaming dreams of empire, Dirk?

STRUAN
Aye.

ROBB studies him for a moment, and then asks:

ROBB
Which one? The British Empire or your own?

STRUAN
(teasing him a little)
Both, laddie. I wouldn't leave Her Majesty out of it.

He turns to gaze towards the mainland, and ROBB follows his glance.

ROBB
China.

STRUAN
(softly)
Why not? What's to stop us?

ROBB
(slightly sour)
A few million Chinese, maybe.

13 Continued 13

STRUAN
Tach! China's a dragon without a head. A great civilisation gone to seed. We can make her great again. A British Chinese Empire...

ROBB
(smiling affectionately)
On ten per cent commission? Well, it's a fine dream, Dirk. I hope you can do it.

STRUAN
(quietly, with confidence)
I'll do it.
(looks down the hill)
Lotus Cloud is anchoring. Time you went aboard.

ROBB
Aye, right.

ROBB turns and hurries down the hill, leaving STRUAN alone.

CUT TO

14 EXT. DECK OF LOTUS CLOUD DAY 14

ROBB climbing the ladder, arriving on deck through the gangway in the rail, and being met by CAPTAIN PERRY who touches his cap before they shake hands.

PERRY
Mister Robb, sir --

ROBB
(heartily)
Good to see you, Perry. You've made a fast trip ---

He breaks off, staring amazed over PERRY's shoulder. His POV: CULLUM STRUAN, his nephew, is standing pale-faced, smiling faintly.

ROBB
(striding toward him)
Cullum! Cullum, boy! What are you doing here?
(beaming with delight as he takes Cullum by the shoulders)
Lad, this is wonderful! Your father's ashore -- but what is it, boy?

14 Continued 14

He stops, his joy vanishing in bewilderment as he sees CULLUM's face. The boy is on the verge of tears, trying to speak. At last he gets it out.

CULLUM
Uncle ...Uncle ...
(with a sudden surge of misery)
We're dead. We're all dead!

ROBB
(bewildered)
What d'you mean?

CULLUM
(weakly)
It was the plague -- the Bengal plague ...

ROBB
(aghast)
The what?
(wheeling on Perry)
D'you mean you've got plague aboard, for God's sake?

PERRY
(head shaking in astonishment)
No, no sir -- it was in Glasgow. The cholera. Didn't Scarlet Cloud bring word of it?

ROBB
(shaking his head)
She's been overdue two weeks.
(his eyes widen in horror as he turns back to Cullum)
Go on, boy. What happened ... in Glasgow?

CULLUM
(faltering)
Mother ... Mother's dead. And Ian, and Lachie ... and Winifred.

ROBB winces in anguish.

And Granny, and Aunt Jean, and her husband, and ... and their babies. They think ... the sickness came on a ship from Bengal.

14 Continued 14

ROBB
(softly)
Oh, God?!

He turns away, like a sleep-walker, staring at nothing. Then after a moment he pulls himself together, and takes CULLUM by the hand, patting him futilely on the arm.

CULLUM
You said ... my father ...

ROBB
Aye. He's ashore.
(he pauses, trying to think)
You'd better ... go to him.
You can take my boat.

CUT TO

15 EXT. HARBOUR AND BEACH DAY 15

LS from Lotus Cloud of boat pulling towards shore.

CUT TO

CS of ROBB, white-faced and shaken, watching it go.

CUT TO

16 EXT. BEACH AND APPROACH TO KNOLL DAY 16

The crowds are thinning now. LS of CULLUM's figure striding through them, approaching the Knoll alone. In LS we see the figure of STRUAN on the hilltop; suddenly he waves, and begins to run down the hill. CULLUM waits for him. STRUAN runs towards him. They are two tiny figures in the distance.

The running figure of STRUAN stops about ten yards from CULLUM, stands stock-still, then approaches him very slowly. We can guess that CULLUM is breaking the news. They stand face to face a moment, then STRUAN slowly embraces his son, holding him in his arms, and after a moment turns with him, his arm round the boy's shoulders.
They stand together, the boy leaning on his father.

FADE OUT

17 INT. CABIN OF LOTUS CLOUD NIGHT 17

CS of two hands on the polished wood of the cabin table, one lying on top of the other, clasping it gently. As the SHOT WIDENS we see that it is STRUAN's hand on top of CULLUM's.

17 Continued 17

STRUAN is seated in his great chair at the table head, upright staring blindly at the table. CULLUM is slumped in a chair at his father's right hand side. At the foot of the table ROBB is standing, despatches on the table before him, reading by the light of the swinging lamp. There are a few glasses, some untouched food, on the table. CS of STRUAN his face hard and strained. Then he blinks like a man waking, looks at CULLUM, gently withdraws his hand, and hopelessly rubs his eyes. He becomes aware that ROBB has stopped reading and is staring at him.

STRUAN
(heavily)
Are those the despatches?
(without waiting for a reply, he goes on wearily)
Let them wait, Robb. It can all wait.

ROBB
(holding out a paper)
I'm thinking you'd better see this now.

Something in his tone makes STRUAN take notice. He looks at the held-out paper, then at ROBB.

STRUAN
Read it out.

ROBB hesitates, then turns the paper to the light, and reads in a flat voice.

ROBB
It's from McKendrick, in London. "I regret to inform you that inadvertently credit was over-extended and there was a run on the bank, started we believe by malicious rivals. We were unable to keep the doors open. The board of Directors has advised that we may pay sixpence ... in the pound. Your most obedient servant, etc..."

ROBB's voice tails off. He lays down the letter, and his eyes are hopeless as they meet STRUAN's. There is no expression in his voice as he goes on.

Sixpence in the pound ... means that our million ... has become twenty-five thousand. We're wiped out, Dirk. The Noble House is bankrupt.

17 Continued 17

STRUAN stares at him down the table in silence. CULLUM lifts his head and looks anxiously from his father to his uncle and back. After a moment STRUAN looks at him and smiles.

STRUAN
It's not the end of the world, lad.

STRUAN and ROBB look at each other in silence, then:

ROBB
This ... on top of all the rest. My God, Dirk, I'm sorry!

STRUAN
(after a pause)
Bankrupt. And we owe the East India brokers a million.

ROBB
(nodding)
That means we lose the clipper fleet. It's all we have. That's.. the end of the Noble House.

STRUAN's eyes gleam suddenly, but his voice is perfectly level.

STRUAN
(very quietly)
No. All we need is a million.

ROBB
(letting out his breath)
All we need is the moon! Where the hell can we raise a million? When word of this ...
(tapping the letter)
... gets out? A pound to a penny it's all over the island already! Our credit won't be worth a tinker's damn! Dirk -- we're done!

STRUAN
Unless we find a million.

ROBB
(exploding)
Oh, get sense, man! A million inside a month -- because that's all the time we've got, before they throw us on the beach! By God, I'll bet Brock's laughing his head off!

17 Continued 17

They are looking at each other when there are the sounds of heavy footsteps overhead, a murmur of distant voices, and the BROCK's voice demanding: "Is the Tai-pan aboard?"

ROBB
Speak of the devil! What did I tell you?

STRUAN
(calling)
Down here, Tyler! Come aboard!

There is the sound of feet on the companion, and BROCK appears. He stands at gaze a moment, taking in the three of them. STRUAN and CULLUM have risen; STRUAN performs the introduction.

STRUAN
(indicating Cullum)
My son, Cullum ... Mr Tyler Brock.

BROCK nods briefly, then comes forward face to face with STRUAN. CS BROCK.

BROCK
Ye lost your family, I hear. I'm right sorry. I know what it is. I lost a wife, and kids, in childbirth. Bad.

STRUAN nods in acknowledgement, indicates a chair and the food on the table. CULLUM moves unobtrusively into the background while STRUAN and BROCK sit.

STRUAN
Sit you down. Hungry?

BROCK
(seating himself, takes a chicken)
Thank you kindly.
(stuffs food in his mouth, chews)
You've got a good cook. Tell him I'll give him a job.

ROBB stiffens, shoots a glance at STRUAN, who remains calm.

STRUAN
He's happy where he is.

17 Continued 17

BROCK
(chewing, shakes his head)
No. No brass, no job. No bank, no credit, no ships, no nothing.
(taps his glass)
And no champagne? This is a special occasion, like.

STRUAN reaches for a bottle from a side table, pops the cork, and pours. BROCK watches him intently.

Sixpence in the pound, eh? Seems the luck o' the Noble House has run out at last.

CUT TO

CS STRUAN as he pours; he glances sharply at BROCK, wondering how he comes to be so well-informed. BROCK, who is regarding him with a triumphant glint in his eye, explains.

(grinning)
Mail packet came in this evening. You're busted, Struan. Flat, stony, bloody well broke.

STRUAN
I'm broke when the East India Company claims its money, not before.

BROCK
(shaking head, derisively)
I've got news for you, Dirk. You don't owe John Company a cent. You owe me. Ye see, this three months past I've been buyin' up your debts in India -- on the quiet, like. I hold a million of your paper. Due next month -- to yours truly. Good health.

He drinks with noisy satisfaction. ROBB stands white and shaken at this news, but STRUAN absorbs it poker-faced.

I've been wonderin'. Should I change the names of your clippers or not?

17 Continued 17

STRUAN
You've got to get them first.

BROCK
I'll get 'em. In thirty days.
(drinks and belches)
Beg pardon. I watched thee up on that hill today. Cock o' the walk -- the Tai-pan. Thinkin' of building a fine house there, maybe? Aye, well. Next month, after you're cleaned out, when they start sellin' the land, I'll buy that hill. Maybe I'll build a house there myself -- or maybe I'll build a privy ...

STRUAN, his face impassive, never takes his eyes off BROCK's. They exchange the stare steadily for a moment, STRUAN refills his glass, and then speaks almost conversationally.

STRUAN
I'll settle you, Brock.

BROCK's eyes light up, and deliberately he draws his knife from the back of his waist, balances it on the palm of his hand.

BROCK
(in a whisper)
No time like the present.

STRUAN
(shaking his head)
I'll choose the time.

BROCK laughs and comes abruptly to his feet, spinning the knife and thrusting it back into its sheath.

BROCK
Bah! You'll be a penniless beggar before that time comes. I'll have broke you and your Noble House.
(turning to go)
Thanks for thy hospitality.
And here ...
(pulling out a handful of coins)
There's twenty quid. Buy thyself a coffin.

He scatters the money on the table and stalks out. There is a moment's silence, then ROBB, who has said nothing all through this exchange, reaches for the coins.

17 Continued 17

ROBB
God damn him to hell!

STRUAN
(sharply)
Leave them! Let them lie!

ROBB withdraws his hand, but after a moment's pause CULLUM comes forward, picks up one of the coins, then another.

(not too harshly)
I said leave them alone.

CULLUM
(quietly)
I want them, father.
(sweeps the remaining coins up)
They're mine now. Good night, father.

He nods respectfully to STRUAN and then to ROBB and goes quickly into the inner cabin.

CUT TO

18 EXT. MACAO HARBOUR EVENING 18

Brilliant sunset over Macao, magnificent sky above the harbour, crowded with shipping -- sailing ships, junks, sampans.

CUT TO

19 EXT. MACAO STREET EVENING 19

Clash of cymbals and Chinese music suddenly, over the bustling, lively, raucous street, crowded with Chinese of every description, European traders, sailors on the spree. SHOTS of booths, Chinese women selling fried prawns; Indian pedlar offering silver jewellery; palankeen swaying past, carried by coolies, containing Mandarin being fanned by servant girl; urchins playing naked in gutters; drunken sailor on balcony, bottle in one hand, half-caste Chinese prostitute in the other; coloured lanterns, rickshaws, fluttering banners.

CUT TO

20 INT. MACAO HOUSE NIGHT 20

A richly-furnished Oriental interior, cool and quiet and dim. STRUAN arriving at head of stairs, being met by a neat Chinese woman who bows low, ushering him to a door across the landing.

20 Continued 20

WOMAN
English lady Mary all same soon see Tai-pan. Tai-pan waitee.

CUT TO

21 INT. MACAO ANTE-ROOM NIGHT 21

The Chinese WOMAN fades into the shadows as STRUAN enters a dimly-lit, but splendidly furnished room. There is a sound of suppressed high-pitched giggling and sighing from the far wall, which is divided into a series of candle-lit alcoves. In three of these are well-dressed Chinese, their eyes pressed to peep-holes in the wall.

CS CHINESE giggling eagerly as he peeps. CS SECOND CHINESE hissing in astonishment as he peeps. CS STRUAN watching them grimly. Then he walks to one of the empty alcoves, lifts a spy-hole cover in the wall. His POV:

A brilliantly-lighted bedroom, its walls entirely of mirrors, in which we see, very briefly, MARY kneeling upright on the bed above an enormously fat Chinese. She is naked, with her hands folded across her breasts; behind her a Chinese youth is nuzzling at her neck.

CUT BACK

to STRUAN, dropping the spy-hole cover in disgust, turning away and walking across to the barred window, where he stands, grim-faced, while the giggling off-screen becomes shrill and then dies away. Rustling as the spectators leave, then the sudden swish of a beaded curtain drawn back, and STRUAN whips round, his hand going to the knife in his boot.

CUT TO

MARY standing in an inner doorway, clad in a transparent robe, a hand up on the bead curtains.

MARY
(mocking)
Put away your knife, Tai-pan. You're in no danger.

STRUAN
(almost under his breath)
You ought to be horse-whipped.

MARY
(turning away)
Is that a criticism -- or a suggestion?

21 Continued 21

He follows her into the empty bedroom, glancing round.

MARY
(pouring drink, holding out glass)
Oh, don't be such a hypocrite, Tai-pan! You've known about me long enough. I prefer Chinese men -- just as you prefer Chinese women. What's the difference?

STRUAN
(quietly)
The difference ... is that you're Mary Sinclair. And this ...
(glancing round)
... is just impossible.

MARY
(sitting on bed, sipping calmly)
For a clergyman's sister, you mean? Not impossible, just unlikely. But I don't imagine you've come all the way to Macao to lecture me about my private amusements, have you? What do you want, Tai-pan? Or would you like me to guess?
(a little smile at his reaction)
You saw the peepshow just now -- the fat one was Weng Chu, chief mandarin of Macao. Very interesting -- and very informative. You're in trouble, Tai-pan -- aren't you?

STRUAN
(sardonically)
I suppose your Chinese lovers have all the news.

MARY
You know they have. I've passed enough of it on to you over the years. Haven't I? And you've been glad of it, in spite of how it's obtained.
(lounging on bed, mocking gently)
What a struggle it must be, between your Scottish business sense and your fine Presbyterian conscience! And we know which always wins. So -- you need help?

21 Continued 21

STRUAN
(hating to admit it,
a fractional hesitation)
I need a million pounds, Mary. In thirty days. The only place I can hope to raise it is China. But I've no sources there -- yet. So I need the word spoken for me, by powerful Chinese, like ..

MARY
... like those lovers of mine of whom you disapprove so strongly. I see.

She nods, gets up, paces across to the mirror, thinking as she examines her reflection. STRUAN stands silent, watching her.

A million ...
(pause)
You and the other traders go to the Canton Settlement next week?

Watching STRUAN's reflection she sees him nod; another slight pause and she turns to face him.

You must seek out Jin-Qua, head of the Co-hong merchants. I shall have word sent. If anyone can help, he can -- for a price. But I don't know ...
(she shrugs)
It's the best I can do, Tai-pan.

STRUAN
Jin-Qua. God bless you, Mary. I won't forget this - whatever comes of it.
(he stands looking at her for a long moment)
Mary ... why do you do it?

MARY
(startled, then softening)
Why? Why? Because when I was a very little unhappy child, I had only one friend in the world -- they still call him Tai-pan.

21 Continued 21

STRUAN
(impatiently)
I don't mean why do you help me? I mean ... why d'you do ... this!
(gesturing round at the love-nest)

MARY
(calmly)
Because it pleases me. That's a reason you should understand, surely?

STRUAN
(quietly, after a pause)
Get yourself some decent young Englishman and go home -- before it's too late.

MARY
(looking him straight in the eye)
There's only one Englishman I've ever wanted.

STRUAN
(drily)
I'm not English, I'm Scotch.

MARY
(innocently, with her little mocking smile)
That wouldn't matter.

STRUAN considers her for a moment, then laughs suddenly, shaking his head.

STRUAN
(in amused despair)
Oh, Mary!

He turns to the door and then stops, looking back at her.

(with sincerity)
Thank you again. Go home.

He goes out. CS of MARY, looking after him.

CUT TO

22 EXT. THE PEARL RIVER AT CANTON DAY 22

Panoramic view of the river, approaching the European Settlement wharf, with the warehouses and buildings of the Settlement itself in the background. The river busy with traffic -- lorchas, sampans, junks, canoes. CS of Noble House flag at a mast-head, then PAN to deck aft, where STRUAN and CULLUM are seated on the deck, facing each other. Between them are cups and utensils.

STRUAN
Now -- try it again.

A Chinese servant pours tea, and they drink ceremonially, their eyes fixed on each others'. Then (in CS) STRUAN picks up a dim-sum in his chopsticks, lays it on CULLUM's plate. Gingerly, using his chopsticks, CULLUM manages to eat it.

STRUAN
Easy does it -- good! Now -- the hard way.

He picks up a dim-sum, holds it out, and CULLUM tries to take it in his chopsticks in mid-air, fumbles it, and grabs it with his other hand as it falls, and eats it.

(laughing)
I doubt you're just a barbarian, Cullum. Never mind -- it took me years to learn to eat dim-sum.

CULLUM
(grinning ruefully)
Does it matter?

STRUAN
To the Chinese it matters. Anyone who doesn't know his etiquette -- he's a man without 'face'. And without 'face' you're nothing. Few Europeans bother to learn, which is why the Chinese think we're barbarians. Maybe they're right.

CULLUM
(thoughtfully)
You like the Chinese, don't you?

STRUAN
(getting to his feet)
Some of them. I respect them and their ideas and institutions.
(grinning over his shoulder)
I think they're worth civilising. Teaching -- our way.

22 Continued 22

CULLUM
(getting to his feet, following Struan to the rail)
Are you so sure our way is the best?

STRUAN
You know of one better?
(taking Cullum by the shoulder)
Now I'll teach you something even more important than eating dim-sum -- because your life may depend on it. D'you see that?

He points ahead, and the CAMERA follows his finger towards the Canton Settlement, going into an AERIAL SHOT as STRUAN's voice continues over. From above we see the little block of warehouses within their stockade, bounded by the wharves and river, the main Residency and its garden, the great open square beyond, guarded by bizarre Manchu soldiers, and the teeming vastness of Canton beyond.

STRUAN (V.O.)
That's the Canton Settlement -- the only place in China where a European can go -- step outside it and you're a dead barbarian. Inside, you can conduct your trade in safety, with the Chinese merchants -- our opium for their teas and silks. But out there, beyond the settlement -- that's China, the sleeping giant. And God help us if she wakes before we're ready for her.

CUT TO

23 EXT. OPEN SQUARE AND ENGLISH GARDEN DAY 23

CLOSER AERIAL SHOT of square crowded with Chinese hawkers, vendors, and beggars. At its farthest edge a mass of hovels and huts stretches to the gates of Canton in the distance. PAN across square to English Garden on near side, trade discussions are taking place by the gate in the fence which separates the garden from the square, between Chinese merchants and Europeans -- BROCK, GORTH, TILLMAN, COOPER, CULLUM, and ROBB among them.

CLOSE SHOTS of the bargaining: a fat CHINESE in a palankeen, outside the gate, carried by coolies, nodding while his Clerk plies an abacus; BROCK sniffing at a handful of tea held out by a CHINESE; another CHINESE jabbering to TILLMAN while two COOLIES unroll a bale of silk.

CUT TO

23 Continued 23

LS of Residency overlooking garden, STRUAN smoking as he looks out from upper window.

CUT TO

24 INT. STRUAN'S RESIDENCY DAY 24

CS STRUAN looking out, staring down into the garden. He turns abruptly at the sudden sound of squabbling behind him, the door bursts open and a young CHINESE BOAT GIRL, in coolie hat, ragged shirt and trousers, grimy and dishevelled, scrambles in, while a SERVING WOMAN, squealing in Chinese, tries to stop her.

SERVANT
(grappling with Boat Girl)
No can stop this one piece cow! Bad cow! Ayee! Bad cow!

STRUAN
(jerking his thumb)
Cow out! Plenty quick-quick, savvy? Out!

The GIRL struggles free, confronts STRUAN with her hat still on, speaks in a wheedling voice.

BOAT GIRL (MAY-MAY)
You no want this cow? Plenty good in bed. Jig-jig two dolla, never mind?
(throwing off hat, speaking in her Scots accent)
You no' want your bonny wee lassie, Tai-pan?

STRUAN
(astonished)
May-May!
(to Servant)
This piece cow can stay, never mind.

The SERVANT goes out, followed by a stream of Chinese insult from MAY-MAY, who is angrily straightening her rags. Abruptly she breaks off, beaming with delight, throws herself at STRUAN.

MAY-MAY
(arms spread wide)
I come see you, plenty good, Tai-pan!

24 Continued 24

STRUAN, laughing, picks her up by the waist and holds her high up at arms' length.

STRUAN
(affectionately)
Plenty good see you, May-May.

MAY-MAY
(anxiously)
Truly? You not doing jig-jig with some new cow? Hey?

STRUAN
(smiling up at her)
No. No new cow. Dear God, girl, you stink to high heaven!

And he deposits her on a high narrow chest-of-drawers and steps back.

MAY-MAY
(on her perch, indignantly)
You stink too if you wear these smell clotheses!

STRUAN
(hands on hips)
Had to wear these smelly clothes. Haven't I taught you the Queen's English? And haven't I bought you a house in Macao? And why aren't you there right this minute?

MAY-MAY
(suddenly serious)
Lift me down, Tai-pan.

He does, and she drops to her knees before him.

(miserably)
I come to you in your great sadness because your Supreme Lady Wife is dead, and all little children.
(starts to cry and kow-tows)
Sorry, sorry, sorry!

STRUAN
(touched, squats down and caresses her)
Thank you, lass.

24 Continued 24

MAY-MAY
(weeping)
I burn incense for her. How long I wear mourning?

STRUAN
(gently)
No mourning, May-May. No, don't kow-tow.
(lifting her chin)
Was that why you came from Macao?

MAY-MAY
(suddenly jumping up)
First bath, then change, then talk, then make love!
(skips away, then stops, gleaming)
No! After bath ... first make love, then talk! Ayee-ah!

She claps her hands, twirls around, and shoots out, leaving STRUAN smiling and shaking his head. He gets up, and is sauntering to the window when there is a knock on the door, and the SERVANT enters, ushering in BLAND CHINESE and two smaller CHINESE. STRUAN glances over his shoulder at them, looks down into the garden.

INSERT SHOT OF trading in garden: TILLMAN and COOPER in discussion over their silk bale, fingering it; ROBB examining several small saucers of dry tea-leaf, fingering one, sniffing it, glancing up at STRUAN's second-floor window.

ROBB holds up three fingers to him, STRUAN holds up five in reply, ROBB nods to the Chinese merchant, makes a note in his book.

ROBB
(with satisfaction)
Two hundred per cent profit. Good joss.

CULLUM
Joss?

ROBB
(smiling)
Joss, laddie? Joss is ... fate ... luck ...God ... and the Devil. Usually all four.

ROBB turns away to talk to BROCK, who is seated, arms folded critically surveying a beautiful ivory screen being offered by Chinese.

CUT TO

25 INT. STRUAN'S ROOM DAY 25

STRUAN turning into CS, his face grim, the open window behind him.

STRUAN
Well, where the hell is Jin-Qua? When can I see him?

BLAND CHINESE
(complacently)
Him no here all same. You wait can. Him back soon never mind.

STRUAN
Never mind! No wait can. Wait twenty-four day already, dammit! Jin-Qua must soon, savvy?

BLAND CHINESE
(shrugging)
Tomollow can maybe never mind.

He bows, withdraws with his companions, and STRUAN turns back to the window muttering 'Tomollow maybe never mind like hell!' He stands drumming his fingers, looking out absently and preparing to turn away when he pauses, frowning. His POV: out in the square the Chinese Vendors are setting up a great chattering and hurrying back towards the hovels, like leaves before the wind. At the garden fence the Chinese merchants are hastily packing up and leaving, their coolies carrying away the palankeens at a quick trot, their servants hurrying behind with the sample bundles.

STRUAN
(calling)
Robb! What's the matter?

ROBB shrugs helplessly. He and the other traders line the fence, staring after the retreating Chinese. STRUAN watches while the square empties, wondering. Silence falls on the empty square, the traders begin to drift back from the fence, talking in little groups. STRUAN is still at the window when there is a noise behind him and he turns. He catches his breath.

His POV: in the doorway is MAY-MAY, transformed; in place of the ragged urchin is a breath-takingly beautiful Chinese lady, her glossy black hair piled, her perfect face composed. She wears a tight-fitting shimmering white gown. Altogether a stunning sight.

STRUAN
(almost reverently)
May-May ... like a goddess.

25 Continued 25

MAY-MAY
(shyly, but obviously delighted)
Ach away, blethers!

STRUAN comes slowly towards her, drawing her to him, and she lifts her perfect face to his. He kisses her passionately and then she looks up at him, licking her lips.

MAY-MAY
(huskily)
You taste so good, Tai-pan.
(mischievously)
First we play backgammon?

STRUAN
(hoarsely, holding her)
No.

MAY-MAY
(teasing)
First backgammon, then love.
Except I lose, get headache
never mind.

STRUAN
Then I won't give you the New
Year's present I was going to.

MAY-MAY
(eyes widening)
Wat present?

STRUAN
Never mind.

MAY-MAY
(alarmed)
No, please, Tai-pan -- wat presen'?
I no tease, truly -- wat presen'?
Jade? Silk? Gold bracelet?
Please, please tell, Tai-pan!

STRUAN
How's your headache?

MAY-MAY
(pouting)
You so bad to me, and I so good
to you.
(sexily)
You love your poor old woman?
All right, then -- backgammon later.

25 Continued 25

And she crushes her mouth hungrily against his as he lifts her on to the bed.

DISSOLVE

26 INT. STRUAN'S ROOM NIGHT 26

CS of dice rattling on a backgammon board, falling double four. The last four white pieces being borne off in STRUAN's hand -- three red pieces remain in his inner table. MAY-MAY's squeal of horror is heard V.O. with STRUAN's laughter.

MAY-MAY
Oh, woe, woe, woe! Back-gammon! Ayee-ah! I lose eighteen thousan' dolla, never play again, never. Ach, tae hell wi' it!

The SHOT WIDENS to show STRUAN, clad in a dressing-gown, sitting on the bed beside the board. MAY-MAY, naked, is lying face down, punching the pillow in her annoyance. He slaps her lightly on the bottom.

STRUAN
Don't swear.

MAY-MAY
(furious, striking at him)
And dinna you slap! You're no' the only man in China, my laddie!

STRUAN
(catching her wrist)
Never say that, May-May.
(he kisses her gently)

MAY-MAY
(sighing)
Tell me, Tai-pan. You marry again? An English? Or a Scotch maybe?

STRUAN shakes his head.

26 Continued 26

MAY-MAY
(seriously)
You should. But still, I be your Chinese supreme?

STRUAN nods, smiling, and MAY-MAY sighs contentedly, then looks resigned, pouting slightly.

Until I get old. Even then, I still give you advice never mind...

She rolls into a silk scarf, wrapping it round herself and sitting up in one movement. She cocks an eye at STRUAN.

You like some advice now, maybe?

STRUAN lifts an inquiring eyebrow, and MAY-MAY becomes confidential.

You have bad joss, Tai-pan. Bad bastard Brock going to ruin you. Is not so? Then -- terrifical simple. Kill Brock!

STRUAN
(amused, considering her)
You're a bloodthirsty wee thing. All in good time.

MAY-MAY
You no kill Brock now? No? Very stupid never mind. Then you better see Jin-Qua plenty quick.

STRUAN
(suddenly alert)
What d'you know about Jin-Qua?

MAY-MAY
(tossing her head, teasing)
O-oh ... your old woman's no sae daft, ye ken.
(she winks, clicks her tongue)
You want see him?

26 Continued 26

STRUAN
Where is he?

By way of answer, MAY-MAY takes his hand, leads him to the window, screened by mosquito netting. CS of them as they stand in shadow, looking out into the dark.

MAY-MAY
(quietly)
Out there.

CUT TO

Their POV: through the screen, the empty garden and the deserted square beyond, bathed in moonlight; in the distance, the dark menacing mass of Canton City.

MAY-MAY (V.O.)
You go see him quick -- tonight.
Tomorrow maybe bad thing happen.

CUT TO

CS of them.

STRUAN
What bad thing?

MAY-MAY
Doan know. You see all China men run away this afternoon? Bad trouble yonder...

CUT TO

Their previous POV, the empty square and dark shapes of buildings eery in the moonlight. Silence, then the distant muffled boom of a great gong. Silence, then the gong again.

MAY-MAY (V.O.)
Terrible danger, all barbarian men.
I send guide -- you see Jin-Qua plenty quick, God bless, Tai-pan.

Half-way through this last V.O. speech of MAY-MAY we

CUT TO

The next scene, so that her last line is heard OVER its opening.

27 DELETED 27

28 EXT. CANTON STREET NIGHT 28

STRUAN's tall figure, muffled, sneaking along, preceded by a dim shadowy figure. They turn a corner. CUT TO a narrow lane by a canal, the two figures crossing a little bridge. CUT TO a doorway, studded with iron. A hand knocks, and the door swings open. CS of STRUAN in his hood, moving cautiously into darkness. Sudden squeal makes him jump. CS of a cat, eyes yellow, leaping away. Darkness again, then a dramatic clash of metal as a great curtain is swept aside, a glare of light, CS of STRUAN tense, blinking.
His POV

29 INT. JIN-QUA'S CHAMBER NIGHT 29

A vast chamber, magnificently furnished, but so dimly-lit that we cannot see its ceilings or walls. A superb carpet, and beyond it a low dais, on which incense bowls smoulder. On the dais sits a tiny, fragile, incredibly ancient Chinese -- JIN-QUA. To one side of the dais a lily-pond is set in the floor, and from time to time JIN-QUA will drop dim-sum to the carp within it. A little fountain plays in the pond.

JIN-QUA nods to STRUAN, and the HOODED MAN who has guided the Tai-pan bows and withdraws, closing the curtain of metal rings behind him. JIN-QUA looks up from feeding his fish, gestures slightly; STRUAN advances, throwing back his hood and sits on a stool facing the old Chinese.

JIN-QUA
(in a thin piping voice)
Hollo, Tai-pan. Long time not meet never mind.

STRUAN
Hollo, Jin-Qua. Glad see you.

JIN-QUA
(indicating bowls on low table between them)
Plees. Tea-ah.

STRUAN
Can. Thanks.

He drinks ceremonially, takes dim-sum in chopsticks, eats one, and bows. He and JIN-QUA will eat dim-sum during the interview.

JIN-QUA
Hear you want see me. Devil trader Brock have Tai-pan by throat. Never mind. Bad joss.

29 Continued 29

STRUAN
Aye. Many debts me. Brock ...
(he holds out a hand, clenches it tight)
Need silver. Forty lacs. Million pound sterling.

JIN-QUA nods impassively, raises a hand. His fingernails are a foot long. At his signal a huge, muscular Chinese appears from behind him, stands beside boxes close to the dais.

JIN-QUA
(casually)
Here forty lac dolla. I borrow. Werree expensee. You want? Jin-Qua lend ... maybe.

The muscular Chinese abruptly throws back one of the box lids. Silver bars gleam in it brilliantly. CS of STRUAN catching his breath, stunned.

STRUAN
(he swallows, breathing hard then speaks emphatically)
Want. Want borrow.

JIN-QUA
(nodding serenely)
Will lend. So. This ...
(indicating the silver)
great favour. Man who do a favour, can ask favour?

STRUAN nods.

So. You promise trade only with Jin-Qua for ten year? Can?

STRUAN
(drawing in a breath tight-lipped)
Can ... if tea, silk, all at market price.

JIN-QUA
Twenty year. Market price plus ten per cent.

STRUAN
Five per cent.

JIN-QUA
Eight.

29 Continued 29

STRUAN
Five.

JIN-QUA
Seven.

STRUAN
Five.

JIN-QUA gives a little hissing sigh.

JIN-QUA
Ah-eeah! Scotch! Ten year six, ten year five. Aye-ee?

STRUAN
(nodding)
Can.

JIN-QUA nods, and with his left hand (which has fairly normal fingernails) takes coins from his sleeve. CS as he places them on low table -- three halves in front of STRUAN, the other three in front of himself.

JIN-QUA
Last. Three favour. Any man bring you one these -- you ... grant ... favour.

STRUAN
(eyes narrowing)
What favour?

JIN-QUA
(spreading hand)
Doan know, Tai-pan. Three favour sometime. Not my life maybe, son maybe, not your life maybe --- your son maybe. Each half coin -- one favour. Can?

STRUAN
(after a sweating pause, nods)
Can.
(holds out his hand)
My custom, shake hands. No Chinese custom, never mind.

JIN-QUA is horrified at the thought of touching the barbarian. Finally he puts out his left hand, closes his eyes, just touches STRUAN's hand and withdraws his own quickly. He sighs with relief.

29 Continued 29

JIN-QUA
My men bring silver in boat to your factory. Tomorrow midnight very secret never mind.

STRUAN
(picking up his three half-coins)
Good joss. Thank you, Jin-Qua.

CS of JIN-QUA. For the first time he smiles.

JIN-QUA
Good joss.

He bows as STRUAN gets up and goes out through the curtain, followed by the muscular Chinese as escort. Sound of the door closing. JIN-QUA sits absolutely still.

CUT TO

30 EXT. CANTON STREET NIGHT 30

STRUAN, led by the MUSCULAR CHINESE, hurrying through the dark streets. They pause at a corner. Silence, and then the sinister boom is heard again. The CHINESE hurries STRUAN along, until they reach the edge of the square. Here they stop. The distant boom sounds again, and behind it, a faint clashing noise, just a whisper, which will grow in intensity over the next few minutes. A wind whistles down the alley behind them, scattering leaves.

CS of STRUAN pulling his cloak round himself, shuddering, staring back. The boom again, and the faint clashing in the distance. The CHINESE mutters in panic, staring back, then seizes STRUAN's arm, points across the dim square to the lights of the Settlement, gestures violently, and then turns and runs for dear life in among the hovels.

STRUAN hesitates; faint dawn is breaking, but the night is full of menace, the wind whistling eerily. The boom sounds again, louder, and STRUAN runs down a side of the square.

CUT TO

31 EXT. GARDEN FENCE OF SETTLEMENT DAWN 31

The settlement fence, seen in WIDE SHOT from the square. Figures moving in the English Garden, a few torches lit, lights in the factory buildings behind. Faint sound of voices, then the boom again. STRUAN's figure runs into SHOT from behind CAMERA, making for the fence.

31 Continued 31

CUT TO MS as he races for the gate. CS of BROCK, musket in hand, thrusting at CAMERA from the gateway. CS STRUAN ducking under the musket, they finish chest to chest, ready to grapple each other.

BROCK
You! What the hell are you doing? Where you been?

STRUAN
What's happening? Why the guns?

Armed traders are clustering round them in the faint light, ROBB, CULLUM, COOPER, and TILLMAN among them, and the thin figure of HORATIO SINCLAIR in black hat and dog-collar.

BROCK
There's a rumour that ten thousand bannermen came into Canton last night. And that they're heading this way.

STRUAN
Bannermen?

BROCK
Aye -- the picked troops of the Chinese Emperor. They say he's tore up the treaty, that he aims to trample this Settlement flat -- wi' us inside it.

ROBB
(urgently)
I reckon it's true, Dirk. Every Chinese servant in the Settlement's vanished.

They fall silent as the boom sounds again, even louder. Every head turns to stare across the square -- still empty. The wind has died, and the silence is deathly -- until very faintly the sound of the clashing is heard, growing gradually louder, slowly growing into a rhythm that seems to shake the ground.

CLOSE SHOTS of the faces along the fence, staring anxiously across the square, finally closing on STRUAN and BROCK. They talk quietly, watching the square.

BROCK
(huskily)
My God, mebbe we'd best vanish, too.

STRUAN
We don't know what it is yet. Hold on.

31 Continued 31

BROCK
What the hell for? There's ten thousand o' those buggers, and thirty of us.

STRUAN
If we run now, they'll catch us on the river anyway. And if we run ... we lose face.

BROCK
True enough. I don't like runnin'. But I'd sooner lose face than lose me bollocks. Anyway -- I've summat to lose. You've nothing. A week from now an' you're ruined -- remember?

STRUAN is staring at the fence in front of them, now visible in the daybreak. The others stare also -- the fence is shaking -- shaking in time to the growing, rhythmic clash from beyond the square. The sound is growing steadily louder, resolving itself into the ponderous tramp of thousands of armed feet.

INSERT SHOT of ranks of huge mailed feet and metal-clad legs marching in CS into CAMERA, stamping the hard-baked ground.

CUT BACK to the traders lining the fence, their eyes fixed across the square.

CUT TO the empty square. The clashing tramp is growing unbearably loud. Among the distant hovels one brazen twinkle is seen -- then another, and another, until there are scores of them all approaching. The sun comes up, throwing its first rays across the square just as the first rank of the Bannermen emerges from the hovels on the square.

They march through the hovels as though they weren't there, scattering the flimsy plaited walls and screens, a solid line of huge brazen figures, seven feet tall from their massive Manchu helmets to their metal-shod feet, all clad in Chinese armour, long spears in hand with trailing pennons, shields on arms. The line is a hundred yards from end to end, right across the square, and behind come rank on rank, a great inexorable mass clashing ponderously towards the settlement. The clash of their march is deafening.

CLOSE SHOTS of Bannermen's helmets, advancing into CAMERA. SHOT along the front rank. SHOT of the great brazen legs. SHOT of the waiting traders, rooted to the ground at the appalling sight.

31 Continued 31

CUT BACK to FULL SHOT of the Bannermen striding up to within ten yards of the fence as though they would trample it flat. Then with one stupendous clash they stop dead, halted motionless only five yards from the fence. Utter silence. They stand, thousands of bronze statues, their faces hidden in the shadows of their helmets, like hideous robots. CUT TO the sweating traders, scared but fascinated, waiting.

A gong booms in the silence, and the ranks of the Bannermen open in the centre, opposite the garden gate -- half a dozen smashing marching steps as the ranks divide, and then they are stock still again. Down the avenue so formed, a huge gilded palankeen is being carried by a dozen slaves, and before it, tottering under the weight of a cangue round his neck and massive chains on his wrists and ankles, a fat exhausted Chinese. Two guards are lashing him on with whips. He reels forward, slips to his knees before the gate. His guards unfasten the cangue and he sprawls face down in the dust, and lies heaving.

CUT TO BROCK AND STRUAN.

BROCK
(in an appalled whisper)
By God, that's Ti-Sen, the Mandarin who signed the treaty wi' us!

CUT BACK to Bannermen. The palankeen stops just short of where TI-SEN is lying. In it, in scarlet and grey, sits MANDARIN HI'PIA, a squat, revolting figure, fanning himself with a jade and ivory fan. His fingernails are in long enamelled cases. A GUARD holds a parchment up before him, and HI'PIA begins to read aloud in a squealing voice.

COOPER
What's he saying for Christ's sake?

SINCLAIR
(urgently, listening)
Sshh! It's an imperial edict. The treaty of Chuenpi is hereby revoked -- the barbarians are ordered out of Canton and Hong Kong on pain of lingering death.

ROBB
(in a hushed voice)
Are they, by God?

SINCLAIR
(waving urgently)
Oh, please, silence! We must pay a fine for all the trouble we have caused, and ...

31 Continued 31

SINCLAIR (Cont)
(incredulously)
... Queen Victoria is ordered to present herself at Peking next week in mourning to beg the Emperor's pardon --

BROCK
(outraged to his patriotic soul)
The impudent son-of-a-Chinese bitch!

SINCLAIR
Hush, I beg you! And the traitor Ti-Sen is to be ... suitably punished.

The reading stops, HI'PIA makes a sign, and two half-naked giants with flails made of chains stride forward and start to beat TI-SEN to death. The chains smash on his body.

UPWARD SHOT of the GIANTS slashing down at CAMERA.
CS of the traders, horrified, staring, some averting their eyes, CULLUM turning away to be sick. SINCLAIR's lips mov. in prayer.

TILLMAN
(staring grimly)
That's how to cancel a treaty, all right.

Having battered TI-SEN to death, the giants drag his body away by its ankle chains, and the LEADING BANNERMAN strides forward and halts, a huge, arrogant, brazen figure, a few yards before the gate, holding out a scroll.
He shouts harshly in Chinese.

SINCLAIR
He says you must come out to receive the edict.

STRUAN
(improvising)
Tell him we're not dressed in the proper ceremonial clothes for receiving edicts.

As SINCLAIR translates, STRUAN whispers to BROCK, whose eyes gleam; he beckons his son, GORTH. The BANNERMAN shouts an angry reply to SINCLAIR, GORTH retires.

31 Continued

SINCLAIR
He says barbarians have no ceremony and are beneath contempt. He says we must all be out of the Settlement by the Hour of the Snake.

BROCK
When the hell's that?

SINCLAIR
Seven o'clock this morning -- two hours' time.

BROCK
Tell him to go and throw dung at himself.

STRUAN
What hour is eleven o'clock at night?

SINCLAIR
The Hour of the Rat.

STRUAN
Tell him we'll leave at the Hour of the Rat -- tomorrow.

SINCLAIR again translates, and the BANNERMAN again shouts back, his voice harsh with anger.

SINCLAIR
He says it must be today, at the Hour of the Sheep. That's one p.m.

STRUAN
Tell him the Hour of the Monkey tomorrow.

BROCK
Bloody monkeys, bloody sheep, bloody nonsense! What's it matter when we go?

STRUAN
We've got to stay till tomorrow! To keep face ... make 'em compromise.

He is of course thinking of the silver from JIN-QUA -- somehow he must stay in Canton until midnight SINCLAIR has been translating. The BANNERMAN takes a step forward, yelling and shaking the scroll threateningly.

31 Continued 31

SINCLAIR
No use. He says the Hour of the Monkey, all right -- but today, not tomorrow. That's at three this afternoon.

STRUAN
(bowing to the inevitable)
All right -- but tell him if he wants to hand over his edict he can damned well come in here and do it!

While SINCLAIR translates, GORTH BROCK has hurried back from the factories, carrying a large canvas bag which he begins to unpack among a knot of traders. STRUAN reaches over, takes GORTH's hat, motions BROCK and the others to form a rank either side of him at the gate, whispers to BROCK, who nods.

CUT TO CS of BANNERMAN, glaring with rage. Then he strides forward to the gate, thrusts the scroll over it at STRUAN, snarling in Chinese. STRUAN raises his hat, holds it high in the air, as do the other traders. With his other hand he takes the scroll.

CS of GORTH igniting firecrackers and flares, which he lobs over the traders' heads so that they crackle and bang in front of the Bannermen, who level their spears and string their bows in anger and alarm. Clouds of coloured smoke engulf their ranks, the MANDARIN HI'PIA fans himself furiously, coughing. The traders replace their hats.

The LEADING BANNERMAN screams an angry question. Anticipating SINCLAIR's translation, STRUAN speaks.

STRUAN
Tell him this is our custom on important occasions. This is how we show our respect for the Chinese Emperor.

Without waiting for a translation the LEADING BANNERMAN wheels about and screams an order. His entire army does an about turn and marches, clashing thunderously, from the square.

The LEADING BANNERMAN turns and screams a final message to SINCLAIR.

SINCLAIR
He says anyone found in the Settlement after three o'clock will die horribly by torture.

31 Continued 31

BROCK
(grimly)
We'd best be packin' our traps
(cocking an eye at
Struan)
Why were you so desperate eager to
wait till tomorrow?

STRUAN
Just to save face. No other reason.

He follows the other traders across the garden to the factories. BROCK, joined by GORTH, stares after him, scratching his chin thoughtfully.

CUT TO

32 EXT. SETTLEMENT WHARF AFTERNOON 32

Tremendous activity and chaos as the traders and their servants prepare to leave. The wharf is jammed with traffic and luggage as the lorchas are loaded -- goods are brought on handcarts, carried by coolies. Chairs, furniture, pictures, cage-birds, carpets, even a globe of the world, are among the impediments being got aboard.

CS coolie tottering up gangplank under bale three times as big as he is; half-naked Chinese sweating as they feverishly fill the holds; bales being swung out on wooden cranes; COOPER at the American factory window bundling up the Stars and Stripes; GORTH at the bow of the Brock's lorcha, sparking the flint in the bow-gun; ROBB at the factory door, scribbling in a ledger as a line of coolies hurry past, carrying goods; CULLUM in shirt-sleeves helping a coolie haul a harmonium up the gangplank. BROCK on his deck staring along the wharf.

His POV: STRUAN, impatient, glancing at watch as he waits at the foot of his lorcha's gangway. He grabs the stout CHINESE SERVANT WOMAN hurrying aboard with her bundle.

STRUAN
You see Lady May-May? All day lady
no see. Where gone?

SERVANT WOMAN
No see Tai-pan's cow woman. Not see
today never mind.

STRUAN lets her go, turning impatiently away, is aware of the BROCKS watching him from farther up the wharf. He strolls towards them.

32 Continued 32

BROCK
You ready for off, then?

STRUAN
(easily)
Just about. I'll show you and Gorth my stern all the way to Hong Kong.

GORTH
The only stern you'll show'll be your own -- when we bankrupt you a week from now!

STRUAN
You don't fancy a race down-river, Gorth? I don't blame you -- you're not fit to row a boat.

GORTH
(starting forward)
By God, you --

BROCK swings a massive arm across GORTH's chest.

BROCK
Hold your tongue! Get aboard!

GORTH hesitates, glaring at STRUAN, then sulkily goes up the gangplank. BROCK turns to STRUAN.

BROCK
Let the lad alone. Make him a friendly wager -- a hundred guineas to the pole at Hong Kong.

STRUAN
(deliberately)
Twenty thousand guineas. His money, not yours.

GORTH
(who has overheard, from the deck)
What are you going to pay with -- pauper?

CS of BROCK glaring furiously at his son. STRUAN looks from one to the other, turns on his heel and goes aboard his own lorcha. BROCK strides up his own gangplank.

CUT TO

33 EXT. DECK OF BROCK'S LORCHA DAY 33

BROCK erupting on to deck, hustling GORTH behind a bale of cargo, slapping him back and forth across the face.

BROCK
(raging)
I've told you afore! You let him alone! You want him to call you out and cut you to bits?

GORTH
(protesting)
I'm not scared of him! I can kill him, Dad --

BROCK
(scornfully)
You and who else? He'd eat thee alive! And another thing -- you don't kick a man when he's down, see?

GORTH
(incredulous)
But Dad, you hate his guts --

BROCK
Aye, by God, I do! And I'll settle him, and kill him, when I's good and ready. If I've a mind to!
(dropping his voice, glaring)
But you --
(stabbing a finger at Gorth)
-- will treat him wi' respect!

GORTH
(blustering)
Respect? For him? If he gets spry --

BROCK backhands him, slaps him left and right, GORTH backing off and then standing his ground.

GORTH
(in sudden passion)
Don't! Don't hit me again, Dad! Don't hit me again! I'm tellin' you, don't hit me again!
(shaking, he is half-threatening, half-pleading with his father)
Don't do it! Tha's hit me for the last time, Dad! And that's God's truth!

33 Continued 33

The rage in BROCK's eyes slowly fades as he regards GORTH, weighing him as an opponent -- and also as a son who is prepared to stand up to him. His face does not soften, but there is a look in his eyes that is not ill-pleased.

BROCK
Best get thee to Hong Kong, if you want to win that twenty thousand.

GORTH, breathing heavily, turns abruptly and goes off. A moment later he reappears, and his voice is a curious mixture of defiance and deference.

GORTH
What course shall I set, Dad?

BROCK, facing CAMERA, has his back to GORTH. His mouth twitches in amusement, but his voice is harsh.

BROCK
Thou got thaself into this mess.
Chart thy own course.
(then he turns, and calls after his son, in a voice not unkind)
Gorth. Don't lock horns wi' Struan, lad.

CUT TO

34 EXT. PEARL RIVER DAY 34

Panoramic view of Pearl River in the afternoon sun. The lorchas are heading down stream from the Settlement wharf. SHOTS of COOPER on his boat, then CS of Noble House's flag, PANNING DOWN to ROBB and CULLUM on her deck.

SHOT of BROCK, with GORTH at the wheel, on their lorcha. BROCK is watching the Noble House lorcha ahead. He glances round at the other shipping -- a sampan is heading back towards the settlement wharf.

CUT TO

35 EXT. SETTLEMENT WHARF NIGHT 35

The wharf still and deserted. Only the river noise. A shutter creaks in an abandoned warehouse. CAMERA PANS along deserted buildings, then to the waterfront, where a few bales rest on the water's edge, beside a moored sampan.

CS of wharf edge. A hand and arm appear, then a COOLIE (STRUAN) heaves himself out of the water, lies dripping between the bales.

35 Continued 35

CS of STRUAN's face, beneath coolie hat.
He prowls forward into the shadows, hurries crouching across the empty wharf, flattens himself against a warehouse wall near the creaking shutter. CS of his face, looking north.

His POV: beyond the settlement, the distant glow over Canton under moonlit clouds. CUT back to STRUAN as we hear again the distant, eerie clash of the advancing Bannermen. He slips round the side of the building.

CUT TO

36 INT. STRUAN'S HOUSE NIGHT 36

The lower hall and stairway. STRUAN's shadowy figure crosses hall, bounds silently up the stairs. In the distance the faint clash of the Bannermen. He approaches his living-room door cautiously, gently pushes it open, steps in.

CS of him pausing in doorway, surveying the moonlit room. Suddenly there is a shrill, heart-stopping scream right beside him -- he whirls, grabbing, and CS of his hands gripping MAY-MAY by the throat behind the door, her face terrified in the moonlight.

MAY-MAY
(in panic)
Tai-pan!

STRUAN
(in a grinding whisper)
Where have you been?

MAY-MAY
(squeaking breathlessly)
Oh, Tai-pan! Bannermen devils coming! You go -- quick, plenty quick! Kill all barbarian! Oh, woe, woe, woe!

STRUAN
Quiet!
(pause)
We've got to hide.

MAY-MAY
(frantic)
No hide. Run awa', plenty quick, all same run like hell!

He claps a hand over her mouth, listens. The sound of the Bannermen is growing louder, crashing closer through the night.

INSERT QUICK SHOT of ponderous mailed feet marching. Then CUT BACK to STRUAN and MAY-MAY in the moonlit shadows of the room.

STRUAN
I can't run. Jin-Qua is bringing a shipload of silver to the wharf at midnight.

He glances about him, strides across to a corner near the window, kneels down, and tests the planking. Two of the planks lift easily, showing a long dark cavity beneath.

STRUAN
May-May! Come here!
(she scuttles across and peers down)
Get in there -- lie down!

MAY-MAY
(reluctant)
Oh, no, Tai-pan. Yon's an awfu' dirty wee hole. And Bannermen find, plenty quick.

STRUAN
Don't drivel! Get in!

MAY-MAY
(getting in)
What drivel?

STRUAN
Drivel is nonsense! Same as you talk all the time.

He replaces the planks above her, examines them critically, raises them again, revealing MAY-MAY staring up.

STRUAN
Anyway, where were you?

MAY-MAY
(preparing to gossip)
Went out to see astrologer. He say very good joss for you --

STRUAN
(getting in beside her)
What?

MAY-MAY
-- and to get hair done. Canton hairdresser terrifical good. You like hair? Pretty bonny, heya?
No' too bad, never mind.

36 Continued 36

STRUAN
Shut up, and lie still!

DOWNWARD SHOT as they lie side by side. STRUAN edges the planks into place above them, slowly lowering them until they fit exactly into place. LS of room in moonlit shadow, the clash of the Bannermen advancing across the square.

CUT TO

37 INT. UNDER THE FLOOR NIGHT 37

STRUAN and MAY-MAY side by side, on their backs, their faces in darkness except for the lines of light where the moon shines through the floor-board cracks. The sound of the BANNERMEN smashing their way into the garden, then into the house.

MAY-MAY
(whispering)
Oh spirits of ancestors and Mither o' God! I say prayers all same Chinese gods and Church of Scotland, maybe?

STRUAN
(hissing)
Quiet!

CUT TO

38 INT. STRUAN'S ROOM NIGHT 38

SHOT towards door. Hideous crashing and shattering of glass from outside. The door crashes open, and BANNERMEN stride in, huge hideous figures from outer space in the dim shadows of the room. This is the closest view we have had of them, and it will be terrifying. The great helmeted figures, like brazen robots, crash about the room, smashing with their spears and mailed feet.

CS beautiful vase being shattered. CS table being cleft in two by an axe. CS mailed feet stamping across floor towards the hiding-place corner.

CUT TO

INSERT SHOT beneath the floor, showing planks sagging just above the faces of STRUAN and MAY-MAY. Her eyes wide with terror, clinging to him.

CUT TO

38 Continued 38

CUT BACK to room, BANNERMEN wrenching open silver casket, gold coins spilling onto table. Grunts of delight from BANNERMAN, grinning as he holds out fistful of coins, croaking in Chinese. A coin slips from his hand, hits the floor. CS of coin rolling slowly along plank, slipping through crack.

CUT TO

INSERT SHOT beneath floor. Coin falls on STRUAN's face, just beneath his eye, lies on his cheek. He does not move, but lies hardly daring to breathe, eyes wide open.

CUT BACK to room. BANNERMAN, snarling with disappointment, reaches down. His great mailed hand scrabbles at the crack. Then he straightens up, reverses his spear, and digs it into the crack in the boards.

CUT TO

INSERT SHOT beneath floor. STRUAN flinching as spear point stops inches above his face.

CUT TO

BANNERMAN about to heave on spear to pry up board, when LEADING BANNERMAN thrusts him violently away, shouting orders. They argue violently, smashing as they do so, the LEADING BANNERMAN thrusting the other from the room.

CUT TO

Beneath the floor. STRUAN's eyes closing in relief, his breath coming out in a long sigh.

CUT TO

39 EXT. SETTLEMENT WATERFRONT NIGHT 39

The last of the Bannermen are leaving the settlement, their rearguard trampling along the waterfront, laden with loot, and disappearing through the English garden. As the last man vanishes right off screen, a shadow moves across an alley-way between the factories on the extreme left.

CS STRUAN and MAY-MAY crouched at corner of building, staring intently towards the river. Their POV: the Pearl River by night, thin wraiths of mist moving above the oily surface.

CS of STRUAN, his head turning as he watches. He stiffens, his hand tightening on MAY-MAY's shoulder, nodding towards the river. His POV: through the mist trails on the river a dark, indistinct shadow is moving; the sound of water

39 Continued 39

chuckling under the keel, then through the mist a great red eye, and as it emerges we see it is on the prow of a lorcha gliding slowly and silently into the wharf. STRUAN, on his feet, grasps MAY-MAY's hand, and they run to the water's edge.

CUT TO

40 EXT. WATER'S EDGE NIGHT 40

STRUAN and MAY-MAY arriving as the lorcha glides close to the wharf. A Chinese BOATMAN in a loin-cloth stands on the gunwale, a boat-hook in his hand.

STRUAN
(calling softly)
You come Jin-Qua? Then keep her moving!

He sweeps MAY-MAY off her feet, throws her bodily across the few feet of water; the BOATMAN gathers her in, hauls her upright, then STRUAN leaps across the intervening space. LS down deck of CHINESE MAN at helm throwing it hard over, the lorcha surging away from the wharf into the night.

CUT TO

41 EXT. PEARL RIVER NIGHT 41

The lorcha heading out into mid-stream.

CUT TO

42 INT. THE LORCHA'S HOLD NIGHT 42

The hatchway lifts, and STRUAN comes down the little ladder carrying a lantern, the BOATMAN following, and behind him MAY-MAY peeping cautiously. The two men advance into the hold, MAY-MAY hesitating at the ladder-foot. STRUAN hangs up lantern, turns up wick, the light showing the double row of chests stacked in the hold.

STRUAN pries open chest with crowbar. CS of chest, packed with silver bars. CS of STRUAN taking big breath as he lifts out a bar, examines it, muttering 'Aye, aye'. NEW ANGLE on MAY-MAY, watching him, impressed.

STRUAN
(to Boatman)
My fine clipper, at river-mouth
How many hours?

42 Continued 42

The BOATMAN holds up four fingers, STRUAN nods thoughtfully, lays down bar, looks broodingly at silver chests and turns away abruptly, the BOATMAN following him on deck. MS of MAY-MAY alone in hold, regarding silver chests apprehensively.

CUT TO

43 EXT. LORCHA'S DECK NIGHT 43

LS along deck from bow, STRUAN standing alone by mast, glancing up at sail. BOATMAN squatting by rail, HELMSMAN in BG. MAY-MAY emerges from hold, carrying paper, other hand behind her back. She approaches STRUAN, slightly nervous.

MAY-MAY
Tai-pan, yon is hell of a heap of silver down there. Very worry', very frighten'. I wish to pray for its safety.

STRUAN
(with a grim nod)
You pray away, lassie -- for both of us.

MAY-MAY
(moving towards rail)
And I shall make offering to the river-gods --

STRUAN
(sharply)
What?
(impatiently)
There are no gods. There is one God, and Lord Jesus is his son. Say your prayer to Him.

MAY-MAY
(distressed)
But your Lord Jesus is not Chinese! He is barbarian! And he is only two thousand years old! Our Chinese river gods ten thousand years old! Better I should make them offering ... if you doan mind ...

Reluctantly she displays the bar of silver she has been holding behind her back, looking pleadingly at STRUAN.

43 Continued 43

STRUAN
(scandalised)
Good God, woman, are you mad?
D'ye think I'll waste good silver
on your heathen superstitions?
Pagan nonsense, worshipping idols --

MAY-MAY
(standing up to him)
Doan' Christians worship idols?
Doan' I see statues of barbarian
Lord Jesus an' Mary Supreme Lady
in churches --

STRUAN
(impatiently)
Those are Catholic images --

MAY-MAY
(pertly)
Catholics not Christians, then?

STRUAN
That's entirely different. I've
told you a thousand times. The
Reformation --

MAY-MAY
(throwing up hands)
I know, I know, John Knox, no
Popery, rule Britannia, never
mind! Look, Tai-pan ...
(pleading)
I be good Christian -- tomorrow.
But this is tonight, and this is
Chinese river, with Chinese river
gods. Please, Tai-pan, let me offer
them one little bar silver for our
safety, and make prayer to them ...
(holds up paper)

Looking at her, STRUAN's anger softens. He shakes his head, half-amused.

MAY-MAY
(eagerly)
We got plenty silver.

STRUAN
(giving up, tolerantly)
What does your prayer say?

MAY-MAY
(clears throat, reads
from paper)
'Oh, wise and powerful river gods,
accept this enormous bar silver,

43 Continued 43

MAY-MAY (Cont)
worth thousand pounds Bank of England, and bring us safe to my barbarian's ship, and then to Hong Kong, which the barbarians have stolen from us!

STRUAN
I don't think much of that prayer, considering it's my silver.

MAY-MAY
(primly)
It is polite, and it is true. It is for a Chinese god.

Having delivered this crushing rejoinder, she goes to the rail, holds out silver and paper, eyes closed. Then she lets the paper fall into the water, hastily whips the silver bar under her shirt, and turns smiling to STRUAN.

MAY-MAY
(well pleased)
There!

STRUAN
(shocked)
You wee cheat!

MAY-MAY
(urgently)
Ssssh! Not so loud! You want to spoil everything?
(impatiently)
You doan' think I really throw away good silver? I no' daft! Gods are like people -- they believe anything if you tell it right.
(seeing Struan about to speak)
Ssssh! Don't let river-god hear us!

STRUAN
(sardonically)
Why not? He's a Chinese God, isn't he? He doesn't speak English.

MAY-MAY tosses her head impatiently and goes off, STRUAN smiling after her.

CUT TO

44/54 DELETED 44/54

55 EXT. PEARL RIVER DAWN 55

The first rays of the sun reflecting on the water in a magnificent sunrise as the lorcha runs down towards a clipper ship silhouetted on the distant horizon.

CUT TO

56 EXT. CHINA SEA DAY 56

China Cloud, all sail spread to catch any breath of wind, cruising gently over a pearl-grey sea. The horizon is hidden in distant mist; thin grey clouds overhead.

CUT TO

57 INT. HOLD OF CHINA CLOUD DAY 57

CS of the silver bars, tight-packed in gleaming rows.

CULLUM (V.O.)
(in awe)
And that's what a million pounds looks like.

ROBB (V.O.)
Aye. It's frightening.

SHOT WIDENS to show them contemplating the silver, ROBB solemnly, CULLUM in wonder tinged with exhilaration. CS of STRUAN watching their expressions. He is slightly to one side, his pocket Bible in his hands.

STRUAN
It's got to be paid for, remember.

CS of the open Bible, three half-coins pasted to the inner cover.

STRUAN (V.O.)
Any man brings you the other half of one of these -- you do any favour he asks.

CUT to CS of STRUAN

STRUAN
That's my word to Jin-Qua.

ROBB nods in resignation; CULLUM frowns slightly.

CULLUM
Your word. Suppose ... I didn't wish to be bound by it?

57 Continued 57

Sensing the challenge beneath the words, ROBB shoots him a quick glance. A moment's pause, and then STRUAN closes the Bible and regards his son calmly.

STRUAN
Then you'd have no place in the Noble House, Cullum.

There is a tense pause. CULLUM, flushing a little at his father's matter-of-fact ultimatumn, looks to be about to say more, but ROBB, glancing from one to the other, smooths the situation over.

ROBB
Aye. Well ...
(patting the stack of silver)
... it's a godsend, anyway. Shall we drink to it?

STRUAN nods, and goes up the ladder. CULLUM, resentful, hesitates before following, but ROBB catches his sleeve.

ROBB
Two quick words, Cullum. Don't cross your father, and be patient. He's a strange man, and God knows he's not an easy one -- but he knows what he's doing.

CULLUM mounts the ladder. ROBB, after a last doubtful glance at the silver, follows.

CUT TO

57A EXT. DECK OF CHINA CLOUD DAY 57A

The three emerge from the hatchway, converging on a table where drinks have been set beneath an awning, a Chinese steward hovering. CULLUM, tight-lipped, is the last to reach the table. ROBB lifts a glass ceremonially.

ROBB
(heartily)
To the Noble House -- and the friendship of its partners!
Slainte*

STRUAN
(raising his glass)
Slainte va!

---

* Good Health! (pronounced "slansh" and "slanshy-va")

57A Continued

57A

CULLUM
(pausing, while
they watch him)
Slainte.

STRUAN throws his glass overboard, ROBB follows suit, and then CULLUM.

STRUAN
And your first job as a partner, Cullum, will be to bid at the Hong Kong land sale. We want good sites for offices and warehouses -- you mark 'em out and buy them ... all except one.
(to Robb)
Remember the little hill we stood on that day, above the point? That's where the Noble House is going to stand. I'll do the bidding for that -- in person.

ROBB
Aye? You won't be the only one. If you want it, Brock'll bid for it -- and he's just the man to raise the price until it ruins you, Dirk.

STRUAN
Brock's been trying to ruin me for twenty years. Nobody's going to stop me buying that hill.

ROBB shakes his head, CULLUM regards his father impassively. STRUAN leans against the table, folding his arms.

STRUAN
Another thing we'll do -- we'll give a ball. The first in the history of Hong Kong. A month from today.

CULLUM looks interested despite himself. ROBB groans.

ROBB
(pouring another drink)
D'you hear him? He's got a genius for trouble.

CULLUM
What d'you mean, uncle?

57A Continued 57A

ROBB
Think about it, boy! A ball! Every female on the China Coast having hysterics about what she'll wear. They'll hound their husbands and fathers and steal each others' dressmakers --

STRUAN
(nodding)
So we'll give 'em something to sharpen their appetites. A prize for the best-dressed lady. A thousand guineas?

ROBB
(coughing over his drink)
A thousand what? You're never serious? Man, Dirk, that's just ... just extravagance!

STRUAN
The Noble House can't afford to be cheap. Eh, Cullum?

CULLUM
(taken aback)
A thousand guineas is more than a factory hand earns in a lifetime!
(recovers, stares at Struan)
Since you ask me -- I think it's obscene. What do you gain by it?

STRUAN
(steadily)
Face, Cullum. Credit. A reputation for the grand manner. Is that obscene?

Before CULLUM can retort, ORLOV's shout interrupts them.

ORLOV (V.O.)
Tai-pan!

They turn to look ahead. Their POV: ORLOV by the starboard rail and a SEAMAN clinging to the shrouds above him, pointing beyond the starboard bow to where a thin mist is shrouding the surface of the placid sea a few hundred yards away. Beyond the mist-trails, the fog is thicker still. The distant brazen clang of a gong is heard. The three move forward to the rail.

57A Continued 57A

ROBB
What is it, Orlov? We're running into sea-mist --

STRUAN
(as the gong clangs again)
That's not all we're running into.

CUT TO

58 EXT. THE SEA-MIST DAY 58

LS down the full length of China Cloud's deck, with hands running to the rails and scrambling into the rigging, staring ahead at the distant fog. Vague shapes are showing in it, eerie formless shadows growing darker.

CUT to CLOSER SHOT of the fog-bank, something black emerging -- the long beak of a China Sea war-prau, with a curious white fringe hanging from it and stretching along its side. CS of a line of hanging skulls, close together, swinging to the motion of the prau (a great war galley).

NEW ANGLE on fog-bank, a second beak emerging. There are two galleys, sleek and menacing, driven by long banks of oars moving in time to the brazen clanging of the leader's gong. Each carries a huge silk sail (the foremost is a silver stork), limp in the windless air, and long streamers of coloured silk trail from their upper works. On the rails, above the oars, are projecting platforms crowded with fighting men -- Chinese, Dyaks, Philippinos, Malays, armed to the teeth with swords, spears, hatchets and bows, and all as ugly as sin.

Each ship has its bobbing skull-fringe; the leader has three crucified corpses above its forecastle, and on its raised stern-castle is the great war-gong, beaten by two pirates with fighting-irons. The galleys glide out into the clear sea, diverging to come either side of China Cloud.

CUT TO

59 EXT. DECKS OF CHINA CLOUD DAY 59

CS of CULLUM staring horrified.

CULLUM
In God's name -- what are they?

LS of quarter deck and main deck beyond, ORLOV springing to the forward rail.

59 Continued 59

ORLOV
Pirates! Clear for action! Get those guns out, McKay! Stand by!
(whirling on Struan)
Orders, Tai-pan?

STRUAN
(to the Helmsman)
Steady as you go! Orlov! Lay your aim on the leader, but don't fire till I give the word!

There is pandemonium on the main deck as the crews fling themselves on the guns, running them out, CS of the crews in action, boys scampering from below with cartridges, hands straining on the gun-tackles, McKAY bawling 'Load! Handsomely, now!' CS of ball being rammed into gun-muzzle. CS McKAY roaring 'Run Out!' Then the squeal of trucks as the guns are run out.

LS above rail, past SEAMAN's head, of the pirate galleys backing their oars, swirling spectacularly either side of the clipper. CS STRUAN shouting: 'Up boarding nets!' MS SEAMEN heaving on a line and the boarding nets rising above the rail.

LS of the whole main deck from above, the boarding nets spreading out like a great web to enclose the clipper from rails to yard-arms, and in BG the pirate praus sweeping round.

CS of ORLOV roaring: 'Carronades! Load with grape! Lay an aim on the platforms!' CS of bag of grape being stuffed into carronade, which swings round to cover the fighting-platform of the nearest prau.

CUT TO

60 EXT. PIRATE SHIPS DAY 60

CS PANNING along the pirate's side, showing skull fringe, platforms crowded with hideous, half-naked pirates, ancient ornamental cannon being run out.

CUT TO

61 EXT. QUARTER-DECK OF CHINA CLOUD DAY 61

ORLOV, STRUAN, ROBB, CULLUM, at forward rail.

ORLOV
(shouting above the din)
See those colours, Tai-pan? That's Wu Kwok and the Silver Stork!

61 Continued 61

INSERT SHOT of leading prau, the silver stork on its scarlet mainsail. CUT BACK to quarter-deck of China Cloud.

STRUAN
(quietly)
So I see, Mr Orlov. Hold your course.

ROBB
(beating the rail)
Dirk, you can't fight them! They carry two hundred men apiece! Dear God, and only a few hours from home!

CULLUM
(almost to himself)
The silver!

STRUAN
(glancing at him calmly)
That's right, Cullum. First things first.
(to Helmsman)
Starboard a point.
(to Cullum again)
Suppose you were Tai-pan, and cut off by the bloodiest pack of cut-throats in the China Seas. What would you do?

CULLUM
(white-faced)
I don't know.

STRUAN
(nodding)
Good lad. Neither do I.
(shouting to McKay)
Train those guns low, Mr McKay, and wait for the word!

CUT TO

62 EXT. DECK OF SILVER STORK DAY 62

Crowd of pirates round a huge catapult, ready strung, with an oil-soaked projectile in its cradle. Brazier burning, MALAY standing with lighted torch. Jabber of Chinese orders. MALAY lights the bundle. LS from behind it of China Cloud, then the catapult is sprung, and the flaming ball arcs away into the air with a tremendous whoosh. CS of another catapult firing.

CUT TO

63 EXT. PANORAMIC VIEW OF CHINA CLOUD AND PIRATE SHIPS DAY 63

The two flaming missiles arcing through the sky, falling ahead of China Cloud. CS as one plunges into sea across her bows with a huge hiss and plume of smoke.

CUT TO

64 EXT. QUARTER-DECK OF CHINA CLOUD DAY 64

STRUAN grim-faced, with ORLOV beside him.

STRUAN
(quietly)
Heave to.

CUT TO

65 EXT. PANORAMIC VIEW OF CHINA CLOUD AND PIRATE SHIPS DAY 65

With ORLOV'S V.O. roaring 'All hands! Heave to!', China Cloud's yards come round and she swings to in the light breeze. CUT to CS of STRUAN looking towards the Silver Stork.

CUT TO

66 EXT. ALTERNATING SHOTS STRUAN AND SCRAGGER DAY 66

A long-boat being rowed by pirates towards China Cloud, SCRAGGER, a tall white man in striped jersey and head scarf, with rings in his ears, standing in her stern. He hails China Cloud.

SCRAGGER
Ahoy, China Cloud! Is the Tai-pan aboard?

STRUAN
(from the rail)
Who are you? What d'you want?

SCRAGGER
(grinning up)
Scragger's the name, mate. Formerly of Shoredictch, the East India Company, and Botany Bay. Pleased to meet you.

STRUAN
What's a Londoner doing on a China pirate?

66 Continued 66

SCRAGGER
(amiably)
Makin' a livin', mate, same as you. Wu Kwok wants to talk to you.

STRUAN
Tell him I don't talk to pirate scum.

SCRAGGER
Well, you're talkin' to me, ain't you?
(he laughs)
Wu Kwok says you're to come aboard wi' me. And in case yer don't feel like it -- I was to show yer this.

He raised his clenched fist above his head and opens it, palm uppermost. CS of his palm, containing a half-coin.

CUT TO

67 INT. WU KWOK'S CABIN DAY 67

CS of WU KWOK, a magnificently-built Chinese, totally bald except for the long pigtail down his back. He is finely featured, impassive, proud. He wears a shimmering gold weskit and sarong, and his arms are loaded with jewelled bracelets. As the SHOT WIDENS we see he is seated at a low table opposite STRUAN. They are gazing at each other without expression; SCRAGGER leans against a bulkhead with folded arms, watching in mild amusement.

The cabin is vast and furnished with magnificent screens, silks, cushions, and furniture, all sadly soiled and jumbled all over the place. Without taking his eyes from STRUAN's WU KWOK lifts a finger imperceptibly, and a SERVANT GIRL comes forward with a huge silver tray of dim-sum on little dishes, chopsticks, tea, etc, and places it between them. She pours the tea and retires, bowing.

WU KWOK drinks tea ceremonially, STRUAN following suit. Then, with great delicacy, WU KWOK takes a morsel from his own plate with chopsticks, places it on STRUAN's plate. STRUAN takes it up with his own chopsticks, eats it; then transfers a morsel from his own plate to WU KWOK's, who eats it in turn. Then WU KWOK holds a morsel out in his chopsticks to STRUAN, who has to perform the difficult task of taking it in his chopsticks in mid-air. But he succeeds, and in turn presents a morsel to WU KWOK in mid-air. WU KWOK drops it. After a moment STRUAN retrieves the fallen morsel with his chopsticks, places it on a side dish.

67 Continued 67

All this happens without change of expression on either side -- a silent battle of etiquette which STRUAN has won, to WU KWOK's intense, but concealed, annoyance. The only sign of emotion from either man is the vaguest flicker in their eyes. Finally STRUAN lays down his chopsticks with a slight polite inclination of the head. WU KWOK regards him a moment, then points at STRUAN's plate.

WU KWOK
(in broad Cockney)
Dontcha want any more grub, mate?
We got tons o' the bleedin' stuff.

The shock of hearing English, in this accent, from an immaculate Chinese, leaves STRUAN momentarily bewildered.

STRUAN
(recovering)
No thanks. I'm glad you speak English. Where did you learn it?

WU KWOK
Where the 'ell did you learn to eat like a Chinaman?

STRUAN
From my Chinese friends.

WU KWOK
Yeah? Well, I learned English off Scragger 'ere. So ...
(sits back, regarding Struan)
... you're the Tai-pan, are you? Likely-lookin' feller, you are. You know what -- you'd take a long time to die.

STRUAN
You wouldn't.

There is a dangerous silence; SCRAGGER watches, tense. Then WU KWOK frowns.

WU KWOK
You got a bloody funny accent. 'ow come you don't talk English proper, like me?

SCRAGGER
I told yer, Wu Kwok -- 'e went to school. They learn to talk posh at school.

67 Continued 67

WU KWOK
(bleakly)
Is that a fact?
(glances malevolently at Scragger)
Bleedin' fine teacher you were -- I don't think.

STRUAN
(intervening)
Where did you get this?
(opens hand, showing half-coin)

WU KWOK looks at it, chuckles, then laughs outright.

WU KWOK
That? Off Jin-Qua, o' course. Where the 'ell d'you think 'e got the silver to lend you? The only people wi' ready cash in these parts, mate, is pirates. But ... Jin-Qua's an old mate of ours -- we invests with him occasional. Nah then --
(indicates coin)
you gotta do me a favour --- right?

STRUAN
(nodding)
Go on.

WU KWOK gets to his feet, indicates that STRUAN should follow, and leaves the cabin.

CUT TO

68 EXT. MAIN DECK OF PIRATE SHIP DAY 68

WU KWOK emerging from cabin with STRUAN and SCRAGGER. WU KWOK barks an order and from the rabble of pirates on deck twenty hurry forward to stand in a ragged line, and a motley, wicked-looking lot they are. WU KWOK inspects them briefly, SCRAGGER pushing them into line. WU KWOK turns to STRUAN.

WU KWOK
You've a fleet o' twenty clipper ships, right?

STRUAN
Nineteen, to be exact.

WU KWOK thrusts one pirate out of the line, sending him staggering.

68 Continued 68

WU KWOK
So you take these nineteen men o' mine for three years. Train 'em on your clippers, make 'em into prime seamen -- navigation, dead reckonin', the 'ole dam' business. Teach 'em their trade ...

The TWENTY have a variety of navigational instruments about them -- one has a compass round his neck, which WU KWOK touches; another carries a sextant, and WU KWOK takes it, weighs it in his hand. Another has an open case of mathematical instruments, seen in CS.

Then CS of STRUAN registering it, his eyes narrowing momentarily.

WU KWOK
Then you send 'em back to us -- an' we'll 'ave nineteen trained clipper captains -- Chinese captains. See?

STRUAN
And that's your 'favour', is it?

WU KWOK
(blandly)
That's part of it. You just got a new clipper, Lotus Cloud. We want it.

STRUAN
You don't want much.

WU KWOK
(angrily)
You promised Jin-Qua -- any bleedin' favour!

STRUAN weighs the half-coin, considering; his eyes stray again to the case of instruments in the pirate's hand. He nods, and WU KWOK grins in triumph.

WU KWOK
We'll take delivery o' Lotus Cloud one week from today. You promise?

STRUAN
(nodding)
I'll keep my promise. In full.

CUT TO

69 EXT. HONG KONG HARBOUR DAY 69

The harbour crowded with shipping -- clippers, junks, small craft, an immense assembly. AERIAL SHOT sweeping across them and then along the beach, from Happy Valley, now densely crowded with Chinese hovels and lean-to's. CLOSE SHOTS of the teeming Chinese thousands who have swept into the Valley; children swarming everywhere, squalor, cooking fires, confusion. Then PANNING along to the European part of the beach -- wharves have been erected, and huts and small warehouses and go-downs are on the shore.

Crowds of traders, Chinese, clerks, coolies, soldiers, seamen; up towards the flagpole area there is a forest of tents and huts -- this is the more 'official' area, and some of the bigger pavilions are guarded by sentries. Not far off a detachment of soldiers is drilling, to the bark of orders and the sound of bugle calls. Near the Governor's pavilion a cricket match is in progress.

CLOSE on Governor's pavilion, LONGSTAFF seated with champagne at his elbow, in shirt and trousers with white top hat, a cricket bat in his hands. GLESSING is in attendance, and STRUAN and CULLUM are standing beneath the awning. LONGSTAFF is complaining loudly.

LONGSTAFF
... and the result is that we're being positively swamped by Chinese. In the last two weeks thousands of them have come swarming in, heaven knows where from, in junks, sampans, anything that'll float. I see no end to them -- hordes of the brutes!

GLESSING
Happy Valley is teeming with them, living in unbelievable squalor. God help us if disease breaks out.

STRUAN
Well, at least we have plenty of workers.

LONGSTAFF
Oh, as to that, thank goodness for this ... ah ... young man of yours ...
(indicates Gordon Chen, standing modestly off to one side)
I must say, Struan, he's proved himself invaluable. If anyone needs workers, or to have building organised, then Mr Chen's the man to see. Eh, Mr Chen?

69 Continued 69

LONGSTAFF (Cont)
(breaks off to shout to the cricketers)
Run you fool! You can't score by standing still!

STRUAN looks keenly towards GORDON CHEN, who has bowed acknowledgement to LONGSTAFF.

STRUAN
(thoughtfully)
Becoming a Tai-pan among the natives, Gordon?

GORDON
(bowing modestly)
I do what I can, sir, for His Excellency and Hong Kong. And for the Noble House.

LONGSTAFF
(warmly)
Does it dam' well, too. And I need all the help I can get, let me tell you -- what with the island sinking under the weight of Chinese immigrants, and the Fleet gone to Canton to reoccupy the settlement and teach a lesson to that treaty-breaking scoundrel of an Emperor ...
(sips champagne and sighs)
If I'd known what governing Hong Kong was going to be like -- eh? What is it, Glessing?

GLESSING
(indicating the cricket match)
You're in, sir.

LONGSTAFF
Eh? Oh?
(gets up, muttering)
If it isn't one blasted thing it's another. They still using that fast bowler? Damn ...

He strides out, bat in hand, to polite applause from the ladies and gentlemen watching the game. GORDON CHEN, with another bow to STRUAN and CULLUM, goes off quietly. STRUAN glances after him as he and CULLUM saunter from the pavilion.

69 Continued 69

STRUAN
What d'you think of your half-brother?

CULLUM
(evenly)
He seems a decent sort. Very modest -- and capable.

STRUAN
You don't mind?

CULLUM
That his mother was Chinese? That you have Chinese mistresses --

STRUAN
Just one, at the moment.

CULLUM
(coldly)
It's no business of mine.

STRUAN
Neither it is. The land sale takes place in an hour -- have you marked down our plots?

They are walking through the crowd to the Noble House's pavilion, where ROBB is dealing with crowds of clerks, and talking to ORLOV.

CULLUM
Yes -- half a dozen good sites, for offices and warehouses on the waterfront ...

CUT TO

70 EXT. ENTRANCE TO STRUAN'S PAVILION DAY 70

CULLUM (V.O.)
... they should be worth a fortune in a few years' time.

70 Continued 70

STRUAN
(as they come into SHOT)
Some sites are worth more than money.

ROBB
(breaking off his talk with Orlov)
You're talking about that damned hill, I suppose?
(glances towards hill, seen in LS)
Dirk, we can buy all the land we need. If you get into a bidding match with Brock, it could ruin --

STRUAN
I'm buying that hill for our Great House. Me. And that's an end of it.

CS of CULLUM listening, his face impassive.

BROCK (V.O.)
(breaking in harshly)
And what are you going to buy it with, Struan?

CUT to MS of BROCK, standing four-square, thumbs hooked into his weskit. He is dressed to the nines for the land sale. Behind him the stout figure of MRS BROCK approaching, with their daughter TESS, and GORTH.

STRUAN
(facing him)
Money, Tyler. You want some?

BROCK
I want enough to cover the debts I hold. Eight hundred and twenty-four thousand, five hundred and sixteen pounds, six shillings an' ten pence. Due today.

STRUAN
(smiling)
Down to the last penny, eh, Tyler?

70 Continued 70

BROCK
Aye, by God.

STRUAN
I'll settle with you after the land sale.

BROCK
(grinning)
Nay, lad, you'll settle first. Happen I'll need the money to buy that hill of yours.

MRS BROCK and TESS have come up; STRUAN, ROBB and CULLUM bow. TESS bobs a curtsey.

STRUAN
(with perfect composure)
Mrs Brock, Miss Brock -- good afternoon, ladies. May I present my son, Cullum Struan?

CULLUM
(bowing to Mrs Brock)
Your servant, ma'am.

CS of CULLUM registering TESS. CS of TESS, a remarkably pretty girl, but shy and demurely dressed. She looks down bashfully, then up again at CULLUM. They are mutually impressed.

CULLUM
... Miss Brock.

TESS
(in a small voice)
Sir.

There is a brief pause in which BROCK is frowning uncertainly, STRUAN notes the rapport between the young people, and smoothly changes the subject.

STRUAN
And of course, Cullum, you've already had the pleasure of meeting Mr Brock the younger.
(nodding amiably to Gorth)
I hear you touched the flag pole five hours ahead of me, Gorth. Congratulations. That's twenty thousand I owe you.

70 Continued 70

GORTH
(offensively)
Have you got it?

STRUAN
I'll pay you when I settle with your father. Now. On the beach. That suit you, Tyler?

CS of BROCK taken aback, angry and deeply suspicious. He is not quite certain whether STRUAN means to pay his debt, or whether 'settle' has a more sinister meaning. He stands uncertain a moment.

BROCK
(thickly)
Right. On the beach. Come, Mrs Brock.

He takes his wife's arm and turns abruptly away, just as MRS BROCK is about to engage STRUAN in conversation.

MRS BROCK
(beaming)
I understand we're to have a grand ball, Mr Struan, with prizes for -- Mr Brock!

71 EXT THE BEACH DAY 71

The foreshore, just back from the temporary jetties that have been erected. Boats moored at them, and beyond, the ships riding in the harbour. The beach and jetties are aswarm with people, mostly Chinese and sailors, but also a few traders. McKAY and some SEAMEN are on guard outside a bell tent above which flutters the flag of the Noble House. Before it BROCK and GORTH are waiting. CUT TO STRUAN approaching, followed by ROBB, CULLUM, ORLOV, and a small crowd, including MARY and her brother, REV. HORATIO.

STRUAN
(meeting Brock)
You have the drafts, Tyler?

BROCK hands them over without a word, glowering. STRUAN looks at them.

STRUAN
(producing coins from his pocket)
Six shillings and ten pence -- that was the odd change, wasn't it, Tyler?
(gives the coins to the glaring Brock)
And then eight hundred and twenty-four thousand five hundred and sixteen pounds ... if you'll sign this receipt?

BROCK
(furious)
Where's the money?

STRUAN turns his head, and at the signal his SEAMEN whip the tent away in one dramatic movement, revealing a huge pile of silver bricks glittering in the sunshine. A huge gasp of amazement from the crowd, followed by laughter and shrill noises of greedy wonder. There is an immediate surge of the crowd towards the pile.

BROCK
(struggling for speech)
God rot you to hell!

He suddenly turns and plunges through the crowd, followed by GORTH. They fetch up, staring at the silver, then as BROCK realises that the crowd are approaching his precious pile, he turns and roars at them.

71 Continued 71

BROCK
(shouting, arms outspread)
Get back! Get back, you thievin' buggers!

A Chinese urchin has climbed on to the pile, followed by a COOLIE reaching out towards the pile. BROCK rushes at them striking at the child with his hat.

BROCK
(roaring)
Get off! Get out o' that, you bloody varmint!
(to Gorth, who is fending off other predators)
Gorth! Get our lads down here, sharp! Run, man, afore they lift the bloody lot!

He runs to and fro in front of the pile, trying to stem the prying mob, while GORTH plunges away. CS of GORTH, STRUAN catching his arm as he ploughs past.

STRUAN
Better hurry, Gorth, your twenty thousand's in there, too.

GORTH
Damn you!

He races off, and STRUAN turns on his heel. LS of BROCK and a few friendly SEAMEN keeping the crowd at bay, with BROCK'S V.O. roaring: 'Get the marines! Where's the sogers? Damn you all, keep off my brass!'

CS of STRUAN as he walks off, then stops as he comes face to face with MARY. She is smiling as she holds out her hand.

MARY
So the Tai-pan wins again.

STRUAN
(taking her hand)
Thanks to you. Mary ... I'm grateful.

MARY
In spite of the three little broken coins?

STRUAN
(startled)
How did you know about those?

71 Continued 71

MARY
(with a wry little smile)
I have friends, too, remember. Well-informed Chinese friends.
(as Struan's face hardens)
Oh, don't put on your pulpit face, Tai-pan. It's my business how I amuse myself.
(taking his arm)
Anyway, I'm thinking of becoming a reformed character. On your advice, you'll be flattered to know.

STRUAN
(as they walk)
Flattered -- and surprised.

MARY
Remember you told me to get myself a nice young Englishman? Well, a certain highly-placed naval captain has been showing himself very attentive lately ...

STRUAN stops in surprise, looks round. LS of GLESSING talking to LONGSTAFF and staff officers.

STRUAN
You mean Glessing?

MARY
(complacently)
He's English, and young -- and quite nice. I think he'll propose. I don't promise I'll accept him, mind. But I might. And what would the Tai-pan do then, poor thing -- when he wants news out of China?
(tapping his arm)
Which reminds me -- what reward do I get for the information I've given you already?
(mimicking Chinese)
What present you give to poor English lady?

71 Continued 71

STRUAN
(smiling, considering)
A present? Let's see ... you know I'm giving a grand ball, with a thousand guineas for the best dressed lady? What would you say to the finest gown money can buy?

MARY
(her eyes gleaming)
Ah-h. famous! The kind of gown that would win the prize -- and knock Miss Shevaun Tillman's lovely green eye out ...

STRUAN
(smiling)
You're sure Captain Glessing won't mind?

MARY
Captain Glessing will be delighted to have a bride with a thousand guineas.

GLESSING himself is striding down towards them. He points past them down the hill, laughing.

GLESSING
Mr Brock has had to call in the army, it seems!

CUT TO LS of the silver pile, a file of marines with fixed bayonets taking up position round it, keeping back a jeering mob, while BROCK mops his brow, glaring. CUT BACK to STRUAN, MARY and GLESSING.

GLESSING,
I must say, you and he seem to share a remarkable mutual hatred.

STRUAN
(glancing at him)
Hatred? Yes. But that's not all we share.

MARY
What else, Tai-pan?

For a moment STRUAN does not answer as he looks down the hill. Then he smiles, as though his thoughts were far away.

71 Continued 71

STRUAN
(mildly)
A memory, Mary. From nearly forty years ago, when I was a little powder monkey, and Brock was an acting gunner. Good gunner, too. He made my life hell. But we share a memory, of a certain ship, on a certain day, that no one who was there can ever forget.

GLESSING
What ship? A merchantman?

STRUAN
No, captain, not a merchantman. H.M.S. Victory. At Trafalgar.

He moves off past them, up the hill, GLESSING staring after him open-mouthed.

CUT TO

72 EXT. THE LAND SALE DAY 72

Under the governor's pavilion, a platform has been set up, with a pulpit at which an auctioneer is calling the lots for sale. LONGSTAFF sits off to one side, still in his cricket clothes and top hat, sipping a drink, with GLESSING at his elbow. MARY and REV. SINCLAIR sit not far away. Elsewhere SHEVAUN TILLMAN between TILLMAN and COOPER. QUANCE off to the other side, recording the scene in oils. The space before the platform is crowded with traders, BROCK and GORTH in the centre. STRUAN, CULLUM, and ROBB are at the back of the crowd. On an easel beside the auctioneer the lots are marked off on a map of Hong Kong.

CS of the easel, with only one lot left. The AUCTIONEER, V.O., is calling: 'And two hundred -- and fifty -- three hundred -- and twenty-five. Any advance on twenty-five, three two-five. At three-two-five -- sold! To the Noble House!' Lot 49 on the board is crossed off.

WIDE SHOT of the auction. CS CULLUM scribbling, ROBB beside him.

CULLUM
That's the sixth lot, uncle. All done.

ROBB
(with satisfaction)
Not bad. Not bad at all.

72 Continued 72

STRUAN is moving along the back of the crowd.

CUT to CS of AUCTIONEER.

AUCTIONEER
(raps his gavel)
And that, ladies and gentlemen, concludes the land sale! Your Excellency.
(bows to Longstaff, who nods)

CS STRUAN wheeling round, staring in disbelief at the AUCTIONEER. Then:

STRUAN
(voice raised)
The sale is <u>not</u> concluded!

BROCK
(equally startled)
By thunder it's not!

AUCTIONEER
(blinking at them)
Gentlemen? There are no other lots for sale.

STRUAN
What about the hill? The central lot?

CS of ROBB, frowning in astonishment, CULLUM tight-lipped and pale, looking straight ahead. STRUAN and BROCK are pushing to the front of the crowd.

BROCK
(indicating Struan)
There's two of us wants to bid for the hill.

AUCTIONEER
(hesitating)
Ah ... the central lot. I'm afraid, gentlemen, that it has already been sold.

LONGSTAFF
(in his mild drawl)
That is so, Dirk. By private treaty, this morning.

72 Continued 72

BROCK
(thunderstruck)
Private treaty?

STRUAN
(looking deadly,
his voice harsh)
Who bought it?

AUCTIONEER
(nervously)
Ah ... ah ... Mr Cullum Struan.

CS of CULLUM, pale and determined. CS STRUAN his face set like stone. ROBB glances at CULLUM in bewilderment, then turns anxiously as STRUAN strides through the opening crowd to confront his son.

STRUAN
(his voice like ice)
You bought that hill?

CULLUM
(facing up to him,
scared)
Yes.

STRUAN
For whom?

Before CULLUM can reply, the REV. SINCLAIR, who has left his seat, interrupts.

SINCLAIR
(enthusiastically)
For the Church, Mr Struan. Your son proposed that the Church should have the hill -- as a fitting place for God's house. It was a blessed inspiration! His Excellency signed the deed, in perpetuity.

But STRUAN never takes his eyes off CULLUM.

STRUAN
You knew I'd set my heart on that hill.

CULLUM
(still pale, but
head up)
Yes. I knew.

72 Continued 72

STRUAN
(after a long pause)
I'll see you at sunrise tomorrow -- on your hill. Come alone.

He turns on his heel and walks away. CS BROCK, his face blank, then starting to chuckle, the chuckle growing to a laugh, then laughing uproariously, clapping his hands. The shocked buzzing of the crowd, and BROCK's raucous guffawing, follow STRUAN as he strides from the pavilion.

CUT TO

73 EXT. THE HILL DAWN 73

STRUAN stands on the hill, looking out to sea, a haversack on the rock beside him. CULLUM walks into SHOT and stops, waiting. After a moment, STRUAN turns his head, looks at him without expression. CUT TO CS CULLUM, white and strained, plucking up his courage.

CULLUM
(stammering)
Ab-about the land sale ...

He breaks off, trembling. STRUAN watches him deadpan.

CULLUM
(suddenly bursting out, his voice shaking)
I had to do what I did! I had to. You would have bid for this hill -- and bid and bid and bid! And Brock would have forced you up and up -- and you wouldn't have backed down, because of losing face!
(he spits out the word)
And when the price was impossible, he'd have left you holding it, and you'd have been ruined! So I had to buy it for the Church -- to prevent you destroying yourself and the Noble House with your selfish idiot pride! You forced me!
(he pauses, trembling)
Now ... you know -- and you can do whatever ...

STRUAN
(after a pause)
You expect me to kill you?

73 Continued 73

CULLUM
Isn't that how you deal with people who get in your way?
(receiving no reply, he bursts out again in a choked voice, near tears)
You used to be God to me! In the last month I've seen you for what you are. An opium-runner. An adulterer. A pirate. A greedy, ruthless tyrant who ...

He stops, shivering. STRUAN watches him impassively, then picks up his haversack, nods upwards.

STRUAN
Come on.

He starts off, CULLUM doesn't move. STRUAN pauses, looking back.

Come on.

He sets off, and after a moment CULLUM follows. CUT TO LS of the two figures leaving the Hill, starting up the Peak. CS downward of STRUAN striding up path, CULLUM trudging some distance behind. CS CULLUM pausing, sweating, then ploughing on. LS of STRUAN reaching summit, grounding haversack. CS of CULLUM arriving, panting.

74 EXT. THE PEAK DAY 74

STRUAN, hands on hips, gazes around. CULLUM leans against a rock, regaining his breath.

STRUAN
The view's better from up here.

INSERT PANORAMIC SHOT of magnificent view -- the blue carpet of the China Sea stretching away, the brown-green islands, the rising sun bathing it all in light, the tiny toy ships in the harbour below. CUT BACK to STRUAN, sitting on a rock, taking food packets, bottle, and glasses from haversack. STRUAN tosses a packet to CULLUM.

STRUAN
Have some breakfast. You look as though you need it.

He pours drinks as CULLUM stands bewildered, the packet in his hands.

74 Continued 74

STRUAN
(quietly, as he pours)
I'm proud of you, Cullum. Very proud. You're brave. Not many men have dared to cross me. But you did -- with your knees knocking under you. So -- slainte, Struan beg! *

Raises his glass, drinks, while CULLUM stares at him.

Brave ... but not too clever. You think Brock would have broken me in that auction -- it didn't occur to you that I might break him ... leave him holding that measly hill at an impossible price. Eh?

CULLUM
(his face a study)
But ... but ... if that's what you intended, why -- why in God's name didn't you tell me? Or tell Uncle Robb --

STRUAN
(offering the other glass)
When you're Tai-pan, Cullum, you keep your plans to yourself. And you trust no one.

CULLUM
(furious)
Not even your brother? Not even your own son?

STRUAN
(deliberately)
I know my brother. And I'm still finding out about my son.

CULLUM
(dashing the glass aside)
Damn you! Damn you to hell! You're all-knowing, aren't you? God in your own smug image, aren't you? The great Tai-pan, who jerks the strings and makes the puppets dance --

* Good Health, little Struan!

74 Continued 74

STRUAN
(suddenly harsh)
Yes! But never for my own sake! For the Noble House. That's what matters. You crossed me yesterday, and all the world saw, and you gained more face in five minutes than you could in twenty years. And you did it alone. Like a Tai-pan ... some day.

CULLUM stands a moment, thinking, then looks at STRUAN, and when he speaks his tone is not so much defiant as calmly certain.

CULLUM
When that day comes, I'll guide the Noble House as I see fit. You should understand that now. I'll use it for the ends that I want -- my way, not yours. You dream of empire, of wealth, of unlimited power. I don't.

STRUAN
Not yet. You're only twenty-one.

CULLUM
(flatly)
You won't change me.

STRUAN
(packing haversack)
God forbid I should try. I'll leave that to you, and the world. But in the meantime, I'll teach you some more about being the Tai-pan ...

Picks up the haversack, motions CULLUM to start downhill.

... about his honour, and how he pays his debts.

They go down the hill together, STRUAN with a hand on CULLUM's shoulder. Beyond them the huge sweep of the islands and the sea.

CUT TO

75 EXT. DECK OF CHINA CLOUD DAY 75

CS of a broken coin being tossed up and down in a hand, George Raft style. Beyond the hand the open gangway in the rail of China Cloud, SCRAGGER coming briskly into view from the rope-ladder, touching a finger to his brow.

SCRAGGER
(grinning)
Top o' the day to you, Tai-pan.

The hand closes on the coin and CUT TO CS of STRUAN, nodding acknowledgement. He walks to the rail.

STRUAN
There she is, Scragger -- Lotus Cloud. Clyde-built on American lines. She's yours, and you can put your own crew aboard her whenever you like. And that fulfils my favour to Wu Kwok.

LS from China Cloud of Lotus Cloud riding gently on a calm sea perhaps quarter of a mile off, her sails furled. Midway from her lie two pirate praus (but neither of them is the Silver Stork itself). Their banks of oars lie still in the water, a light breeze fluttering their long silk pennons. CUT BACK to SCRAGGER and STRUAN at the rail, CULLUM and ORLOV behind.

SCRAGGER
(in admiration)
Ain't she a peach, though? Our galleys'll have to tow her, I reckon -- 'aven't got enough trained hands to sail her. Not yet -- but we will 'ave when you've finished teachin' Wu Kwok's nineteen lads.
(his smile is triumphant)
You 'aven't forgotten that?

STRUAN
They've started training on our clippers already. There's one of 'em ...

He nods aft. His POV: McKAY on the quarter-deck, teaching a Chinese (one of the pirate candidates) to shoot the sun. CUT BACK to STRUAN and SCRAGGER.

SCRAGGER
I'll hand it to you, mate -- you keep your bargains.

75 Continued 75

STRUAN
I do that.

SCRAGGER steps to the rail, pulls off his waist scarf, and waves it above his head. CUT TO LS of the galleys getting under way, their oars churning the water in time to the clashing of their gongs. They converge on Lotus Cloud.

CUT TO

76 EXT. SIDES AND DECK OF LOTUS CLOUD DAY 76

A galley laying alongside Lotus Cloud, the other galley hooking on beneath her bowsprit. Their platforms are crowded with pirates who scramble aboard, chattering excitedly. LS from her empty quarterdeck as they swarm over the main deck, swinging in the rigging, yelling and laughing, rushing up the quarter-deck ladder to examine the wheel and binnacle -- an amazing, half-naked crowd of assorted Oriental savages. CS of pirates at the rails, throwing lines down to the galleys for towing. CS of another hauling down the Union flag, throwing it in the water, while others run up the emblem of the silver stork in its place, shrieking and jabbering with delight. AERIAL SHOT, Lotus Cloud with the two galleys close beside her.

CUT TO

77 EXT. DECK OF CHINA CLOUD DAY 77

STRUAN and SCRAGGER watching. SCRAGGER hitches his belt.

SCRAGGER
I best be goin', then. See them devils don't tear her to bits. Ignorant bleedin' heathen --

STRUAN
No hurry. You'll have a tot before you go, to the success of her voyage.

SCRAGGER
(pleased)
Well -- thankee kindly. I won't say no ...

He follows STRUAN up the quarterdeck ladder. A steward brings forward a tray with glasses, and STRUAN and SCRAGGER pledge each other.

STRUAN
(raising his glass)
A fair slant.

77 Continued 77

SCRAGGER
Best respects, Tai-pan. Don't mind me sayin' so, but it goes agin the grain to see a fine ship like that bein' wasted on yellow scum like Wu Kwok.

STRUAN
(shrugging, tossing the broken coin)
That was the bargain. But I admit I don't like losing two clipper ships inside a month.

CS of SCRAGGER, the glass freezing at his lips momentarily.

We had another, Scarlet Cloud, left Calcutta ten weeks ago, with half a million pound's worth of opium. She never reached Hong Kong.

SCRAGGER
(with feigned concern)
That so? Aye, bad joss. Course, the seas is bad this time o' year, what wi' typhoons an' --

STRUAN
-- and pirates.

SCRAGGER
(gulping his drink)
Aye ... plenty o' them in the South China Sea -- apart from us, like --

STRUAN
(quietly)
But there aren't plenty of these ...

He lifts a leather case from the table, opens it to display mathematical instruments in velvet, initials E.S.

STRUAN
They're geometrical instruments, Scragger --

SCRAGGER
(shaken)
Don't know nothin' about geometry --

77 Continued 77

STRUAN
-- they were in the hands of that pirate of yours --
(indicating the pirate across the deck)
-- the day I came aboard Wu Kwok's flagship. I recognised them. You see, two years ago I gave them as a gift to Ecky Stewart, captain of the Scarlet Cloud.

A split second's pause and SCRAGGER makes a rush for the rail, but STRUAN's foot shoots out and trips him and he plunges sprawling on the deck. Before he can rise ORLOV's foot pins him. STRUAN, with CULLUM staring behind him, looks down at SCRAGGER.

STRUAN
Wu Kwok must have thought it was a great joke. He comes to me with Jin-Qua's coin, demands his favours, and gets them -- and all the time he's laughing up his sleeve, knowing that he plundered my splendid ship weeks before -- and I never knew. Well, I know now ...
(jerks Scragger to his feet)
And you can tell Wu Kwok it doesn't affect the favours. I'll train your men, and ...
(pointing)
... I've given you Lotus Cloud. And tell Wu Kwok I appreciate his sense of humour.

He turns away, releasing SCRAGGER, who stands gaping and then hurries down the ladder and over the side to his waiting boat. LS as it pulls away towards the waiting Lotus Cloud with her escorting galleys. CS of STRUAN and CULLUM at the rail, looking down.

CULLUM
I don't understand. You know they've pirated Scarlet Cloud -- slaughtered her crew! But you still grant them the favours you promised?

77 Continued 77

STRUAN
(matter-of-fact)
I was bound by my word to Jin-Qua. I keep that word -- Wu Kwok has got exactly what he asked for. That, Cullum, is the honour of the Tai-pan.

On STRUAN's last speech, CUT TO CS of him and CULLUM facing each other at the rail. Seen between them, in the distance, Lotus Cloud and the galleys are riding on the peaceful sea, SCRAGGER's boat a quarter of the way towards them. Suddenly with stunning effect, Lotus Cloud blossoms into a great surge of flame, a glaring inferno, and a second later the shattering noise of the explosion comes booming across the sea. CULLUM staggers back, STRUAN grips the rail, watching the towering column of fire as Lotus Cloud vanishes in a shower of flying, burning debris.

CUT TO

78 EXT. THE EXPLOSION OF LOTUS CLOUD DAY 78

WIDE SHOT of a sea covered in flame, a tidal wave of water surging towards CAMERA. CS of screaming pirate faces, aboard Galley No. 1. LS from stern of No. 1 as wave smashes against her side, capsizing her. Bodies hurtle across the deck as water engulfs her in the moment of turning turtle, the mass of pirates hurtling from her platforms and deck into the boiling sea, her oars bristling in the air for an instant before she wallows, keel up, surrounded by foam, with showers of burning rubbish falling from the explosion, hissing among the wreckage and struggling swimmers.

CUT TO main deck of Galley No. 2, her deck lit up in the awful glare, pirates tearing across the deck. CS faces staring up in horror. Their POV a huge flaming mass towering above them, descending. WIDE SHOT from side of Galley 2 as she is engulfed by the falling burning mass, flames billowing out towards CAMERA.

AERIAL SHOT of the disaster. The fiery ruin of Lotus Cloud, with a dense cloud of smoke surging up into CAMERA. Galley No. 1 wallowing bottom up towards top of SCREEN, Galley No. 2 a mass of flame to the right. The water littered with burning debris. Smoke blots out the scene.

CUT TO

79 EXT. SCRAGGER'S BOAT DAY 79

The great wave surging down, sweeping the boat along in a surge of spray, SCRAGGER standing in the stern, clinging to tiller, men hurtling overside.

CUT TO

80 EXT. DECK OF CHINA CLOUD DAY 80

STRUAN gripping rail, CULLUM and ORLOV grabbing for support, stumbling as the shock of the wave staggers the ship. Faces, sails, decks are lit by the fiery reflection of the explosion.

CUT TO

81 EXT. LOTUS CLOUD DISASTER DAY 81

LS from China Cloud. Where Lotus Cloud used to be is empty, surging sea, shrouded in smoke. Galley No. 1 is closest, capsized, surrounded by burning wreckage, with men struggling in the water. To the left Galley No. 2 burns like a great torch. A dreadful scene of devastation, and overhead, like the cloud of an atomic explosion, a vast pall of smoke spreads out in all directions.

CUT TO

82 EXT. DECK OF CHINA CLOUD DAY 82

CS of STRUAN, his face and shoulders crimson in the glare, eyes narrowed against the heat. He tosses the coin once in his palm, then flicks it over the rail as he turns away.

FADE OUT

INTERMISSION

83 EXT. THE BALL AREA NIGHT 83

CS of multi-coloured Chinese lantern. The Marine band is thumping out 'Lilibulero', and as the SHOT WIDENS we see the great dance-floor, laid out in the open air. Flooring covers a vast area, with artificial pillars round the sides twined with greenery and tinsel, and overhead hundreds of Chinese lanterns are hung. A squad of Chinese are sprinkling the floor with chalk, brushing it in, while at one end the Marine band runs through its numbers, the bandmaster tapping his music-stand and calling, 'And one-two-three' as they swing into a waltz. On the edge of the floor buffets are being laid out by Chinese servants -- covered silver dishes, piles of cutlery, mountains of glassware. Just outside the dance area crowds of Chinese watch from the darkness. CLOSE SHOTS of MARINE red-faced playing trumpet, of tiny CHINESE BOY swaying head to music, of perspiring HEAD STEWARD directing waiters, of BAND-MASTER conducting, mouthing 'One-two-three', of ancient, wrinkled CHINESE WOMAN watching, of CHINESE SERVANT with cloths tied on feet 'skating' to polish floor, of little CHINESE GIRL laughing and clapping hands. Her face DISSOLVES into that of SHEVAUN TILLMAN contorted in agony ...

CUT TO

84 INT. SERIES OF SCENES OF PREPARATION FOR BALL NIGHT 84

1. SHEVAUN clinging to bedpost as her MAID heaves at her corset-strings.

SHEVAUN
(gasping)
Oh, God! No more ... please!

MAID
(deftly measuring her waist)
Seventeen-and-a-half, by the Blessed Mary! An' when ye faint, me darlin', do it grace-ful as a cloud, with iverywan watchin'!

CUT TO

85 INT. BROCK'S CABIN NIGHT 85

2. CS of BROCK in mirror as MRS BROCK, resplendent in crimson ball gown and feathers, helps him into fine new brocade coat.

BROCK
(glaring)
What the devil's this? Where's my old coat?

85 Continued 85

MRS BROCK
(firmly, helping it on)
You needed a new coat! A proper man should look proper! There, now ... eh, lad, that's grand!

BROCK
(glowering at his reflection)
You spend money like water, woman! Aye ... well ... it's not bad ...
(surveying himself)
Aye ... mebbe you were right ...
(starts to smile at her)
What's amiss?

MRS BROCK
(plucking up courage)
Mr Brock -- we're taking our Tess to the ball!

BROCK
(shocked)
We're not! I've told you, she's nought but a baby --

MRS BROCK
(gamely)
She's a woman grown!

BROCK
(angrily)
She's not!

MRS BROCK
She is! You can see for yourself!

BROCK
(fuming)
By God! I will! And I tell thee she's not --

He turns angrily and stops dead, staring. His POV: TESS, her hair up, stunningly pretty, in the doorway. CUT BACK to BROCK, bewildered. He blinks, then swallows.

BROCK
(slightly hoarse)
By God, lass, you're like your mother.

CUT TO

86 INT. MARY SINCLAIR'S ROOM NIGHT 86

CS of MARY, staring into mirror.

MARY
You're sure it's ... too late?

SHOT WIDENS to show she is seated, wearing a loose robe. A CHINESE DOCTOR is repacking his medical basket.

DOCTOR
Honourable lady will have child in three, four months.

MARY closes her eyes, and the DOCTOR bows as a MAID conducts him to the door. When MARY opens her eyes, the MAID is behind her again.

MARY
(firmly, lifting her head)
Fetch my dress. And send word to Captain Glessing that I shall meet him at the ball.

CUT TO

87 INT. STRUAN'S NEW HOUSE NIGHT 87

CS of MAY-MAY, frowning, sniffing at a shelf on which vases stand. GENERAL SHOT of room as she peers suspiciously behind screens, into corners. In BG STRUAN, in frilled shirt and trousers, is tying his dress cravat before a mirror, humming softly 'Blow the man down'. He will complete his dressing during the ensuing dialogue.

MAY-MAY
(squinting at ceiling)
Something bad about your new house, Tai-pan. Terrifical bad. Are you sure its <u>feng-shui</u> is correct.

STRUAN
Its feng <u>what</u>?

MAY-MAY
(shocked)
You didn't have <u>feng-shui</u> gentleman to examine house?

STRUAN
And what does a <u>feng-shui</u> gentleman do -- besides costing money?

87 Continued 87

MAY-MAY
Mercy me, Tai-pan! If feng-shui is wrong, hellish devil spirits come in house, bring bad joss!
(in hushed whisper)
Maybe this house built on sleeping dragon's neck!

STRUAN, shrugging on his coat, gives her a withering look.

MAY-MAY
(indignantly)
All very well make fun never mind. But if feng-shui is not correct, and dragon wakes up --

STRUAN
(humouring her)
All right, call in your devil doctor, but you can pay for him yourself.

MAY-MAY
(with sarcasm)
Dear Tai-pan -- so fantastical generous!

As STRUAN, head tilted back, makes a final adjustment to his neckcloth, she tickles him under the chin playfully.

STRUAN
Stop it!
(examines himself critically)
All right?

MAY-MAY
(archly)
Oh, very pretty! All English ladies faint away ... ahhh ...
(makes swooning gestures)
Miss May-ree Sinclair feel all weak, flutter eyelids ...

STRUAN turns from the mirror, walks into outer room, where he picks up hat, stick, and gloves.

STRUAN
(as he walks from the room)
A lot you know about Mary Sinclair.

87 Continued 87

MAY-MAY
(following)
You buy her pretty dress for ball -- cost two hundred dolla. I know. Huh! If you let me buy her dress, I save you sixty seventy dolla, never mind ...
(glancing out of hall window)
Oh, God love us, more fainting ladies!

INSERT SHOT of SHEVAUN and COOPER in their carriage, drawing up at STRUAN's gate. CUT BACK to hall.

MAY-MAY
(sniffing)
Huh! Missee Shevaun Tillman with the big buzzums! That god-rotting cow -- she after you for marriage!

STRUAN brushes past her with a look, opens the front door. CUT TO SHEVAUN, a lacy shawl over her head and shoulders, calling from the carriage.

SHEVAUN
Good evening, Tai-pan! Can we drive you to the ball?

CUT TO MS STRUAN in doorway, bowing and waving. CS of STRUAN from side as he calls back, MAY-MAY standing out of SHEVAUN's sight, beside open door.

STRUAN
(lying politely)
Thank you, Miss Tillman, but I'm afraid I promised to call for my brother.

MAY-MAY rolls her eyes. CUT TO CS SHEVAUN in carriage, pouting archly.

SHEVAUN
Oh ... well, I have only a few dances free, remember. And I'm going to win your prize, you know!

She smiles and waves as COOPER starts off the horses. CUT BACK to STRUAN closing the front door, MAY-MAY, arms folded and looking cynical, leaning against wall.

87 Continued 87

MAY-MAY
(mimicking)
Huh! 'I have only a few dances free, remember! And I going to win your prize!' Big cow! An' I spose you kiss her hand, an' stare at her big buzzums! Why you never stare at my buzzums?

STRUAN is gathering up his hat and stick again.

STRUAN
(sternly)
Come here!

MAY-MAY
(imperiously)
Say please!

STRUAN
(after a hard stare, softly)
Please.

MAY-MAY, suspicious, approaches him, suddenly holds out her hand, queen-like, to be kissed. STRUAN makes her a deep bow, kisses her hand. MAY-MAY melts immediately.

MAY-MAY
(overcome)
Oh, Tai-pan!
(touching his face)
You going to ball -- before it finish, you come back and see poor old woman little minute? Please? Promise?

STRUAN
(smiling)
I'll come. Promise.

He bows and kisses her hand again, then spins her smartly round and slaps her bottom lightly. MAY-MAY screams, seizes a teacup and hurls it, missing. She snatches up another, but STRUAN turns at the door.

STRUAN
Don't throw it!

She lowers her arm.

Good lass. One is fine, two is extravagance.

87 Continued 87

He slips out, and the second cup crashes on the door.

Scenes 88, 89, 90 and 91 are deleted.

92 EXT. THE BALL NIGHT 92

CS of naked feet flapping and stamping vigorously in a sailor's hornpipe, to the accompaniment of the marine band. SHOT WIDENS to show team of Jack Tars dancing in the centre of the floor, watched by the assembling guests. They are first-class hornpipe dancers, and as the music gradually speeds up their feet fairly fly, the guests clapping and stamping in rhythm as the display comes to dramatic conclusion. Huge applause as the sailors skip off, the band strikes a chord, and then sounds 'Hearts of Oak' as LONGSTAFF, accompanied by STANLEY, enters through the canopied entrance, acknowledging the bows and curtsies of the assembly. STRUAN, CULLUM and ROBB are waiting for him by the raised dais, bowing as he approaches. As the music is ending:

STRUAN
Perhaps your excellency would care to lead the first dance?

LONGSTAFF
(handkerchief in hand)
No, no, my dear chap -- forgive me. Quite fatigued by the walk ...
(raising voice, addressing crowd)
Please, everyone, let the dance begin!

He subsides into a chair, and CUT TO CS of CULLUM making his way purposefully across to BROCK's party as the dancers take the floor. He bows to MRS BROCK, turns to TESS.

CULLUM
Miss Brock, may I have the honour of this dance?

TESS shoots her parents an eager look, MRS BROCK nods with satisfaction, BROCK frowns uncertainly.

TESS
(radiant)
Thank you, Mr Struan.

They take the floor. CUT TO CS of GORTH watching them speculatively, then GENERAL SHOT of the dancing. BROCK waltzes ponderously with MRS BROCK, then CUT TO MS of the dais, STRUAN and ROBB watching; LONGSTAFF (seated) with

92 Continued 92

STANLEY behind.

LONGSTAFF
(staring)
God lord, is that Brock's girl dancing with your boy, Struan?

ROBB
(as Struan nods thoughtfully)
And look at Brock, bursting with pride!

CS of TESS and CULLUM dancing. CS LONGSTAFF talking aside to STANLEY.

LONGSTAFF
(significantly)
Mr Montague and Miss Capulet, eh, Colonel?

STANLEY
(puzzled)
Thought their names were Struan and Brock, Sir?

LONGSTAFF sighs wearily, then blinks in amazement. CS of SHEVAUN TILLMAN, on the arm of COOPER, approaching the dais, curtseying. SHEVAUN is wearing an astonishing gossamer dress without visible means of support. As they take the floor, CS of LONGSTAFF and STANLEY.

STANLEY
(reverently)
My God! How does it stay up?

LONGSTAFF
I think the more interesting question is how does it fall down?

GENERAL SHOT of the dancing, PANNING to MARY entering between REV. HORATIO and GLESSING, approaching the dais to make their bows. She looks beautiful, but rather pale, in the magnificent black dress provided by STRUAN; her brother looks distinctly ill-pleased. Having made their bows to LONGSTAFF, they are about to pass on when STRUAN steps forward.

STRUAN
(to Glessing)
May the host claim the privilege of the first dance?

92 Continued 92

And he leads MARY on to the floor. LONGSTAFF glances towards the side of the dais where, in a corner, ARISTOTLE QUANCE has set up his easel, and is recording the scene, between gulps from a glass at his elbow.

LONGSTAFF
Well, Mr Quance, I understand you have the delicate task of judging the ladies dresses?

QUANCE
(eagerly)
Would your excellency care to deputise for me?

LONGSTAFF
(recoiling)
My dear chap! I decide only trivial things, like war with China.

QUANCE
(almost pleading)
But perhaps you'd care to recommend the winner -- unofficially?

LONGSTAFF
(sweetly)
I haven't got the eyes of an artist. Neither will you, after the jealous losers have scratched them out.

CUT TO CS of STRUAN and MARY, dancing.

STRUAN
I hope Captain Glessing has told you that you're the most beautiful woman here tonight.

MARY
(coolly smiling)
You're very eager to see me married off. Was that why you bought me the dress -- so that I would look like wedding-bait for Captain Glessing?

STRUAN
(in mock surprise)
Why, Miss Sinclair! I bought it in payment for information. Remember?

92 Continued 92

MARY
It didn't occur to you that I might want to wear it for you?

STRUAN
(lightly)
You think I'm as vain as all that?

MARY
Yes. But as it happens, I'm wearing it for Captain Glessing. And if he does me the honour to propose -- I'll accept.

CUT TO THE BROCKS, watching as STRUAN and MARY dance by.

MRS BROCK
(sentimentally)
Ee, they're a lovely couple! D'you think he'll marry again? I'd sooner he chose her than that fast piece Shevaun Tillman.

BRIEF SHOT OF SHEVAUN laughing as she whirls by with COOPER.

Disgusting! She's got her eye on him, you know.

BROCK
(heavily)
If your gossip was worth money I could have retired ten years ago.

The dance ends, and CS of a happy CULLUM and TESS as they leave the floor, approaching the BROCK party.

CULLUM
May I have another dance, later?

TESS
(delighted)
Oh, yes, please!

They pause. The BAND-MASTER is calling: 'Ladies and gentlemen, take your partners for Sir Roger de Coverley!'

CULLUM
Why not this one?

TESS
(radiant)
Why not?

92 Continued 92

They take their places. CUT TO MRS BROCK beaming, then shooting an apprehensive glance at her husband.

MRS BROCK
He's a nice lad, that.

BROCK
(frowning suspiciously)
Aye ... if he's like his father he'll be a right randy little devil.

GENERAL SHOT as the dance begins.

CUT TO

93 EXT. GARDEN OUTSIDE DANCE AREA NIGHT 93

Under the lanterns, among the trees, REV. SINCLAIR and GLESSING face each other. CS REV. SINCLAIR.

SINCLAIR
(icily)
I am afraid it is out of the question, sir. My sister has no intention of marrying.

GLESSING
(shaken)
Forgive me, sir, but I have received quite the opposite impression.

SINCLAIR
(deeply agitated)
Then -- then you have received it wrong, sir! You have mistaken common civility for a warmth which I know my sister does not feel for you!

GLESSING
(angrily)
It's you who are mistaken --

SINCLAIR
(stammering furiously)
I am not, I tell you! M-my sister is devoted to m-me -- to m-my work, I mean! She will not marry, d'you hear? She will not!

He turns and almost runs off, leaving GLESSING open-mouthed.

CUT TO

94 EXT. THE BALL NIGHT 94

Sir Roger de Coverley has ended, and two PROFESSIONAL DANCERS have taken the floor, performing a spirited polka, to the delight of the watching guests, who have never seen the dance before. As they finish, bowing before LONGSTAFF, there is general applause. STRUAN has come to stand beside LONGSTAFF's dais, and they both join in the applause. CUT TO CS of BANDMASTER.

BANDMASTER
(beaming heartily)
Now, ladies an' gennelmen -- you've seen how it's done -- the new dance that's the rage of Paris an' Vienna! Pray take your partners for -- the polka!

Laughter and enthusiasm as we CUT TO SHEVAUN, advancing with a confident glint in her eye. Her POV: STRUAN, who sees her approaching and stoops casually to whisper in LONGSTAFF's ear.

LONGSTAFF
(listening)
Eh? What? Me?

He registers the approaching SHEVAUN in her amazing low-cut gossamer dress, and brightens)

By Jove! Why not, what?
(rising, he speaks aside to Stanley)
This may <u>be</u> the interesting part.

LONGSTAFF steps down from the dais, intercepting SHEVAUN with a bow just as she is making for STRUAN. LONGSTAFF leads her on to the floor, SHEVAUN accepting with the best grace she can, but shooting STRUAN a glance of pouting disappointment. STRUAN smiles apologetically and moves away as the dance begins. GENERAL SHOT of the dance: LONGSTAFF and SHEVAUN dancing past, her bosom heaving spectacularly. CUT TO CS QUANCE, goggling round his easel, STANLEY beside him, watching.

STANLEY
Restrain yourself, man, or you'll have a seizure.

QUANCE
(indignant)
A true artist is above mere sensual excitement, sir!

But QUANCE continues to goggle at SHEVAUN, unaware that he is dipping his paint-brush in his champagne glass. CUT TO the

94 Continued 94

dancing again, CLOSING on CULLUM and TESS, laughing as they polka together. CUT TO BROCK and GORTH watching them.

GORTH
(quietly)
Young Struan seems to fancy our Tess, Dad.

BROCK
(grimly)
So I noticed. Time she was home in her bed.

GORTH
It'd be a good match for us, Dad.

BROCK
(his head jerking round)
What? Our Tess and young Struan? Never, by God!

GORTH
If he was married to her, he'd be under our thumb. We'd eat him alive. An' he's going to be Tai-pan o' the Noble House one day -- until it became the house of Brock an' Struan, Ltd. An' he wouldn't be Tai'pan o' that, by God!

BROCK
(after giving him a long hard stare)
And who would be? You?

GORTH
(with a modest shrug)
After you ... Dad.

BROCK takes a deep breath, looks towards the dancing again. His POV: CULLUM and TESS polkaing past, engrossed in each other.

CUT TO

95 EXT. EXIT FROM BALL NIGHT 95

STRUAN striding towards the canopied entrance, pausing at the sight of ROBB, standing alone, looking slightly pale and dabbing at himself with a handkerchief.

95 Continued 95

STRUAN
(checking)
What's the matter, Robb?

ROBB
(unsteadily)
Nothing ... just a little faintness ... the heat in there, I think ...
(blinks, steadying himself)
I'll be fine. You're not leaving before the judging?

STRUAN
I'll be back in time for it.
(obviously well pleased with himself)
But first -- let me tell you a secret. I'm going to propose marriage.

He claps ROBB on the shoulder, strides out, leaving his brother mystified. ROBB stares after him, blinks again, holding his forehead.

CUT TO

96 INT. STRUAN'S HOUSE NIGHT 96

SERVING WOMAN opening front door, STRUAN striding in, through the hall to drawing-room.

STRUAN
(calling)
May-May! I've come home to see my poor old woman! Where are you?

MAY-MAY (V.O.)
(muffled)
Little minnit, Tai-pan! Coming soon can!

STRUAN
(back to inner door)
And I've something to ask you ...

He turns and stops dead as MAY-MAY appears in the doorway, smiling shyly like a child in new clothes. Which, in fact, is what she is -- she is rigged out in the height of vulgar Western finery. Her huge skirt is violently coloured, her hair has been dressed in ringlets, her hat is a great

96 Continued 96

monstrosity, she carries a parasol and totters on high heels. She is heavily made-up and jewelled in what she imagines is the best European taste. She looks ghastly.

STRUAN
(thunderstruck)
Good God.

CS of MAY-MAY, the pleased smile fading from her face. CS of STRUAN recovering too late, trying to mask his reaction.

STRUAN
(hastily)
It's ... it's very nice ...

MAY-MAY goes completely pale, and her parasol falls from her hand. She gives a little whimper, covering her face, and darts out, slamming the door. STRUAN is across the room in a stride, trying the handle, knocking.

STRUAN
May-May! Open the door, lass!
May-May!

No reply. He waits a second, knocks again, and from beyond the door comes a miserable, high-pitched wail.

STRUAN
(rattling the handle)
Open the door, May-May! Come on, it's all right, you look fine --

The wail becomes an angry shriek, and STRUAN puts his shoulder to the flimsy door, bursting it in. MAY-MAY is by the bed, her face contorted with misery, tearing off the hat, hurling it down. She stares at him piteously, weeping, and then abruptly drops to the carpet, kow-towing to him.

STRUAN
(moving towards her)
For God's sake, girl --

MAY-MAY
(wailing, kow-towing)
Fool, fool, fool! Oh, shame, shame! Fool!

She crouches, her face hidden, clawing the carpet. STRUAN stoops over her, touching her shoulder.

STRUAN
Don't do that, lass! Never kow-tow! Come now, get up,

96 Continued 96

STRUAN (Cont)
all's well. You're coming to the ball with me --

MAY-MAY
(in a sudden scream)
No! No!

She scrambles violently away from him and on to her feet, tearing at her dress in a frenzy of grief and shame. As STRUAN reaches for her, she runs to the dressing-table, sobbing, seizes a little stiletto and plunges it at herself, tearing her dress. STRUAN is on her in a flash, grabbing her wrist as she sobs hysterically, trying to break free.

STRUAN
(forcing her hand open)
Drop it!

As she shrieks, writhing, he slaps her across the face, and she staggers free, falling across the bed, wailing weakly and tearing at her hair. STRUAN kicks the knife aside, and stands at a loss until her wails subside.

STRUAN
(firmly, but not unkindly)
Stop crying, May-May, and sit up. I want to take you to the ball -- to meet my friends. I want to tell them --

MAY-MAY
(staring at him in misery)
No ... no ... this slave begs pardon! This slave has lost all face, forever! She has offended! She has no face! No face! Only shame!

STRUAN
(sharply)
You're not a slave and you haven't offended. Now -- dry your eyes and straighten your dress and --

MAY-MAY
(weeping again, kow-towing)
Sorry, sorry, so sorry! Tai-pan sell this slave! She cannot stay, cannot live here, she is shamed!

96 Continued 96

STRUAN
Stop that! You're not a slave, and I can't sell you! And don't kow-tow, dammit!

He stoops and pulls her bodily upright. Her face is ghastly, her teeth chattering hysterically as though she were in a fit. He stares, appalled, and then holds her against himself.

STRUAN
(with emotion, very quietly)
I love you, May-May. I need you. I love you, lassie.

But her face does not change. She is sobbing with a terrible inner intensity, and suddenly she crumples and crouches at his feet, wailing quietly.

MAY-MAY
(between her sobs)
Sell this slave ... she has no face ... no face ... cannot live ... shame, shame ...

STRUAN stands for a moment, helpless. For a moment he thinks of raising her again, then he turns about abruptly and leaves the room.

CUT TO

97 INT. OUTER ROOM NIGHT 97

CS STRUAN as he comes face to face with the old SERVANT WOMAN. She faces him wide-eyed, her normal cheery expression replaced with a fixed, grim intensity. As STRUAN prepares to step past her she puts herself abruptly in his way. Her face is working, and she is on the brink of tears.

SERVANT WOMAN
(urgently)
Noble lady has no face! She feel like slave! You take away her face!

STRUAN stares at her in angry bewilderment. The old woman steps closer, her lips quivering, tears in her eyes.

97 Continued 97

SERVANT WOMAN
(intensely)
Give her back pride! Punish!
Be angry! Make her kow- tow!
Punish, Tai-pan! Or she die
shamed!
(she thrusts a
cane at him)
Punish! Then she have face
again!

CS of STRUAN, appalled at what she is telling him to do, repelled by what seems to him the monstrosity of Oriental female logic. His face shudders, but the old woman continues to thrust the cane at him. Slowly he takes it, as though it were a snake. Faintly through the door comes the soft wail of MAY-MAY's sobbing.

SERVANT WOMAN
(pleading)
Give her back face, Tai-pan ...

STRUAN stares at her. CS of SERVANT WOMAN, and CAMERA stays on her as the door opens and closes. Then comes STRUAN'S V.O. shaking with pretended rage.

STRUAN (V.O.)
(shouting)
Kow-tow! Kow-tow! you
worthless slut!

There is the sound of a cane slash, and a shriek.

I said kow-tow -- on your knees,
you miserable slave!
(another slash)
I'd sell you on the waterfront,
by God, but who would want trash
like you?
(another slash, and
a moan)
Haven't I been good to you?
And you repay me by dressing up
behind my back, making a fool of
yourself -- and me!
(another slash)
Eight thousand in silver I paid
for you -- and I was robbed!
Because you're worthless! A
useless, filthy slave -- kow-tow,
damn you!

Another slash, and another, and a wailing cry. The old woman never moves.

CUT TO

98 EXT. THE BALL NIGHT 98

Thunderous crash of brass and drums, couples swinging into CAMERA in a lively country dance. CUT to GENERAL SHOT of the dancing, the floor a swirling mass of colour. CUT to QUANCE, plainly in the throes of uncertainty as he gnaws his brush and listens to GLESSING who is plainly dropping a hint to him. GLESSING pats QUANCE's arm confidentially and moves off as COOPER approaches, also pauses for a word with QUANCE. This is all seen in LS. ROBB moves into CS, looking pale and ill; as a dancing couple brush past him he staggers, but regains his balance, making a visible effort to pull himself together, forcing a smile at another passing couple. CUT to CS of QUANCE, COOPER leaving and CULLUM strolling up.

CULLUM
Well, Mr Quance? Picked the winner, have you?

QUANCE
(in a dither)
No ... no, indeed. But I've been getting all sorts of hints ... I don't know what to think. What d'you advise?

CULLUM
That you give the prize to Miss Brock -- and I'll pay you a hundred guineas.

QUANCE
(scandalised)
Mr Struan! Why ... that sounds almost like a bribe!

CULLUM
(calmly)
That, Mr Quance, is exactly what it is.

CUT TO

CS of a dramatic roll on a kettle-drum, PANNING up to the beaming BANDMASTER, raising his hand as the roll ends.

BANDMASTER
Your excellency, ladies and gentlemen! To award the prize of a thousand guineas for the best-dressed lady, your distinguished umpire, Mr Aristotle Quance!

Applause as QUANCE, in confusion, takes his bow, and stands by the dais, muttering to himself and shooting indignant glances at CULLUM as the ladies begin to file past to the

98 Continued 98

music of 'Here's to the Maiden of Bashful Fifteen'. Each curtsies to LONGSTAFF, and then to QUANCE, the crowd applauding.

CUT TO

CS of MARY, in shadows just outside the dance area, white-faced as she listens to her brother, whispering intently. MARY stares straight to her front.

SINCLAIR
(his voice hoarse)
I told him it was futile -- that you would not marry!

MARY
(her eyes blazing, but her voice low)
You dared! Well, you were a liar! I shall marry George Glessing -- and you can go to hell, where you belong!

SINCLAIR
(shuddering)
Mary! Mary, you can't! I need you, Mary -- with me! I'm your brother -- I love you ...

MARY
(with loathing, in a whisper)
Don't use the word 'love' to me. I know what you mean.

She walks quickly away and into the ball area. CS of SINCLAIR staring wildly after her as she joins on the end of the ladies' march past. CUT to CS SHEVAUN, curtseying radiantly, CS of QUANCE gulping, other ladies curtseying by, then TESS BROCK, shy but visibly excited, and finally MARY, composed and curtseying superbly. The ladies form a line opposite the dais, and all curtsey in unison to LONGSTAFF, who joins the applause as he rises.

LONGSTAFF
(bowing)
Ladies, I salute you, for your beauty. And Mr Quance ...
(with a wave to him)
I salute you for your courage!

98 Continued 98

Laughter and applause as QUANCE, apprehensive, bows and fidgets. LS of the ladies. PAN ALONG the expectant faces of the men, waiting, CUT BACK TO QUANCE.

QUANCE
(stammering)
Your excellency, I ... ah ... I confess ... most difficult decision. But --
(suddenly resolute)
Truth and beauty and artistic integrity must prevail! The prize goes to Miss Tessa Brock!

CS of delighted TESS, hands clasped to her mouth, the other ladies crowding round, congratulating her. QUANCE mops his brow, makes for his champagne, passing CULLUM, who is applauding wildly. QUANCE draws himself up.

QUANCE
(with lofty dignity)
I would have given her the prize anyway!

CULLUM, still applauding, grins after him, then his smile freezes. His POV: ROBB, beside buffet, catching at his throat, staggering, collapsing, bringing down the tables. Horrified gasps. CUT to LS of ROBB, sprawled on the floor, the crowd staring, CULLUM hurrying to him, and CUT TO:

99 INT. STRUAN'S HOUSE INNER ROOM NIGHT 99

STRUAN's face half in shadow, as he leans on window-frame, looking into darkness. He looks strained and hopeless. He turns his head, as a small hand steals on to his sleeve.

MAY-MAY (V.O.)
(in a tiny whisper)
I didna want to go to ball. Only to dress like ... lady. For you. Only to please.

CS MAY-MAY, tears in her eyes. CS of STRUAN looking at her. Then he crushes her to him, kissing her, caressing her hair.

STRUAN
(in a whisper)
I was coming home to ask you to marry me. Will you, lass -- please? I love you.

They stand in an embrace, MAY-MAY's arms round his neck,

99 Continued 99

her face buried against his, her V.O. murmuring 'Oh yes, yes, Tai-pan!', STRUAN whispering: 'Supreme lady!'

There is a sound of distant knocking, then voices. STRUAN lifts his head, gently lowers MAY-MAY on to the bed, and turns away.

CUT TO

100 INT. STRUAN'S HOUSE HALL NIGHT 100

CS of COOPER and TILLMAN in the open front doorway, their faces grave. CS STRUAN entering hall, stopping at the sight of them.

TILLMAN
You'd better come quickly, Tai-pan. It's your brother ... he was taken ill at the ball. They think it's malaria.

CUT TO

101 EXT. CEMETERY AND ENVIRONS DAY 101

CS of a hideous painted dragon's head, smoke pouring from its nostrils. Banging of fire-crackers as SHOT WIDENS TO SHOW that dragon's head is part of the furniture being carried in a Chinese funeral procession -- banners, tambourines, discordant music, cymbals, coloured smokes, and fireworks exploding right and left. LS of procession, led by GORDON CHEN, winding its way to the foot of the Hill. CUT AWAY to LS up the hill, to the almost-completed church, with only a few new crosses and headstones in its burial plot, the church bell tolling. CUT to MS round the open grave, with mourners, all male -- STRUAN, LONGSTAFF, BROCK, GORTH, CULLUM, STANLEY, GLESSING, one or two others. The REV. SINCLAIR is intoning the Lord's Prayer, which concludes as the CAMERA PANS to new headstone, 'ROBERT STRUAN, 1802 - 1841'. 'Amen' in unison, then CUT to Chinese procession going great guns, winding uphill by a different route from that taken by the Christian mourners as they start down. CS of the Christian mourners, half-way downhill, pausing to look.

STANLEY
(indignant)
What the devil do those blas-phemous brutes think they're doing?

STRUAN
They're my brother's friends, paying their respects in their own way. Let them be.

101 Continued 101

They watch as the procession snakes uphill, making a din fit to wake the dead, firecrackers everywhere, banners, fearful music, cymbals, etc. LONGSTAFF, sighing, puts on his hat.

LONGSTAFF
(gloomily)
You'd think they'd have enough funerals of their own without bothering about Christian ones.

The others are preparing to move on when LONGSTAFF stops them.

Gentlemen, before we disperse ... I have no wish to add to the melancholy of this occasion, but there is something I must tell you. In the past two weeks, five cases of malaria have been reported among our European population. One, our dear friend Robert Struan, we have already lost; the lives of the others are in God's hands. But the surgeon estimates that in Happy Valley the Chinese have been dying at the rate of half a dozen a day. In his professional opinion, this island is fever-ridden.

He pauses impressively. They watch him in silence; STRUAN half-realises what is coming next.

In the circumstances my duty is clear. I must seriously consider the evacuation of Hong Kong.

STRUAN
Over my dead body!

LONGSTAFF
(stiffly)
Very possibly, if the present epidemic continues. And the surgeon thinks it will. Consequently, I have ordered Colonel Stanley to prepare plans for a withdrawal.

He prepares to go, but STRUAN blocks his path.

101 Continued 101

STRUAN
You can't do it! We fought a war for this place! We've sunk the future of the China trade in it!

LONGSTAFF
I've no doubt Her Majesty's Government will arrange compensation.

STRUAN
How d'you compensate for an empire? This is our foothold in China -- the best deep-water anchorage in Asia --

GORTH
You don't know that. It's never been tested.

STRUAN
(bitingly)
Any seaman with half an eye knows it.

BROCK
I'm a seaman, an' I say the sooner we're off this stinking rock the better. Afore we're all dead o' malaria.

LONGSTAFF
For which there appears to be no cure. I'm sorry, Dirk.

STRUAN
No cure that our doctors know of. But everyone's heard of the South American drug -- cinchona, the quinine bark. The Chinese used to cure malaria with it --

BROCK
(scoffing)
Aye, so they say. Old wives' tales. Who's ever seen it?

LONGSTAFF
And even if it does exist, we are some distance from South America.

101 Continued 101

STRUAN
It exists, and we can find it. I'll set Gordon Chen and his people looking for it. Every agent of the Noble House from here to Africa will search for quinine bark. Give me six months --

LONGSTAFF
(angrily)
In six months at this rate there won't be a Chinese alive in Hong Kong! Dammit, Dirk, be reasonable! I don't want to leave any more than you do, but I have a responsibility --

STRUAN
Then act on it. I know the mortality figures, they're no worse than half the ports in the Orient. And this island's too valuable to run away from.

LONGSTAFF
(peevishly)
There's no question of running away! It's ... it's ...
(stands fretting indecisively)

STRUAN
Six months. It's worth a try. If you abandon Hong Kong, what are you going to be governor of?

LONGSTAFF
(flinching)
That has nothing to do with it!
(but he thinks, nonetheless)
I spoke of evacuation as a <u>possibility</u> ... to be considered.
(hesitates, glancing at the others)
I could postpone it ... provided the death rate gets no worse. Six months ... it'd take that long to get permission from London, anyway. Oh, very well! Find your damned drug. But it's my belief we'll have to go in the end.

101 Continued 101

STRUAN
You may. Not me.

LONGSTAFF turns on his heel, strides off to his coach. The others follow, except for STRUAN, who stands looking after them, and CULLUM, who is watching his father uneasily. STRUAN turns to look at him, and realises CULLUM has something to say. CULLUM hesitates, meets his father's eye, and braces himself.

CULLUM
Father ... what with Uncle Robb...
(makes a little helpless gesture)
... and now this business with Longstaff ... I hesitate to add to your ... troubles. But you have to know, and the sooner the better.
(takes a breath)
I'm going to marry Tess Brock.

STRUAN
(after a slight pause)
Whether I like it or not?

CULLUM
(uptight)
Do you?

STRUAN
(quietly)
No.

CULLUM
(icily)
May I ask why?

STRUAN
(conversationally)
You're both too young, too stupid, too inexperienced, and you've no money. Anyway, I'd sooner see you marry a Borneo ape than any kin of Tyler Brock.

CULLUM
(holding in his fury)
I see. Yes, that's about what I expected! It will make not the least difference.

101 Continued 101

STRUAN
(evenly)
That's about what I expected. Have you asked her father?

CULLUM
(smouldering)
Not yet. But I've no doubt his attitude will be the same as yours!

STRUAN
(in half-amused disbelief)
You don't honestly believe that? Cullum, I've just said you're stupid, but I never suspected you were a complete damned fool.

CULLUM
(angrily)
What does that mean?

STRUAN
Brock'll welcome you with open arms, boy! No, he won't, either -- he'll scowl, and frown, and stick out his lip for half an hour -- and then he'll accept you. Why not? You're my only son -- and heir. If he gets you, the Brocks will get the Noble House some day.

CULLUM
(boiling over)
Damn you, and damn your bloody Noble House! D'you think nothing else matters?

CULLUM stands for a moment, seething, then strides off furiously. CS of STRUAN staring after him.

CUT TO

Scenes 102 & 103 are deleted.

104 EXT. QUARTER DECK OF WHITE WITCH DAY 104

CS of BROCK

BROCK
(scowling)
I like the idea o' bein' joined to thy family about as much as you do! But ...

104 Continued 104

BROCK (Cont)
(dropping his voice)
... when your lad proposes, I'll accept him.

STRUAN stands considering him in cold, hostile silence. BROCK meets his stare, chin thrust out, master of the situation, grimly triumphant.

Aye, look down your nose all you want! There's not a dam' thing you can do about it, Struan! Your boy's of age, he's his own master, and if I say he can wed my Tess, you can go whistle to the wind!

STRUAN
Is that what you've sunk to? Trying to steal the Noble House through a girl's skirts?

BROCK is almost at his throat, trembling with fury.

BROCK
(hoarsely)
Now, look you, Struan! You push me far enough, and I'll do what I should ha' done thirty years back! I'll kill you, by God! But I'm not startin' that fight! I don't need to. I didn't ask for this match, but since the young 'un's want it, they can have it. An' if that's the end o' your Noble House, then that's your bloody bad joss!
(steps back
continuing more quietly)
They can marry a year from today. It'll give the lad time to get to know us. Become one o' the family. If you like, we can drink to that -- an' then you can get the hell off my ship.

STRUAN considers him a moment, then turns and walks to the ladder, where he looks back.

STRUAN
You think you're winning, don't you, Tyler?

104 Continued 104

BROCK
(shaking his head)
Nay, lad. I think I've won.

STRUAN goes down the ladder, BROCK smiling grimly after him.

CUT TO

105 INT. STRUAN'S HOUSE DAY 105

STRUAN striding in through front door, throwing aside his hat. TRACK with him into outer room where he comes face to face with CULLUM. For a moment they confront each other in silence, then CULLUM brushes past him and strides out, slamming the door, just as MAY-MAY appears at the inner doorway, carrying a tea-tray.

MAY-MAY
(with bright innocence)
Ah! Number One Son not stay for tea? Young people so much hurry-hurry nowadays, dearie me never mind. Aye, weel ...
(sets down tray. pours tea)
Old people stay at home, drink tea, play backgammon. Loser has to go to bed with winner, you like?
(winks, clicks her tongue, rattles dice)

STRUAN gives her a bleak look that says 'Backgammon -- just what I needed!' MAY-MAY, quite unperturbed, prattles on.

(serenely)
You already owing me four million dolla. So -- no more credit, jus' play for love. Come on, sittee down. You see, your luck change.
(she shakes the dice, feigns surprise)
Och, I never! Double six!

She hands him the dice-box, smiles wistfully at his worried frown, shakes her head.

Tai-pan worried because Number One Son all frantic hot to jig-jig Missee Brock, no? Tai-pan no want them marry? Why not?

105 Continued 105

STRUAN
You've had your ear to the keyhole often enough -- you know why.

MAY-MAY
(sighing impatiently)
Tai-pan, for smart man you awful dam fool. See -- you think ...

CS of backgammon board, her fingers placing a white counter and a red counter together.

... when young man ...
(tapping white counter)
... marry young woman ...
(tapping red counter)
... that this happen ...
(she puts both counters in among a mass of red counters)
... he get all swallowed up in her family never mind?

STRUAN, watching her, gives a slight nod of agreement.

Blethers! You just mostest ignorant man. When young man and young woman marry, this happen ...

She takes white and red counter out of the red group, puts white counter on top of red counter.

For weeks! They play buzzums and exhaustings in bed -- ayee-ah!
(sighs ecstatically)

STRUAN is about to say something, but doesn't get the chance.

MAY-MAY
(holding up hand)
Wheesht! Haud on! You let them marry, and you
(pointing at Struan)
build them house! They go off to it together by-by, make new family ...

Putting the two counters together under dice cup at other side of board.

105 Continued 105

MAY-MAY
... no need old families any more never mind.

CUT to SHOT of STRUAN and MAY-MAY, she complacent, he looking thoughtful.

So ... you let Number One Son marry Missee Brock. Then devil-bastard Brock find he no get son -- he lose daughter.
(tossing her head triumphantly)
You bet, laddie. I no' sae daft.

STRUAN
(nodding)
I'll tell Cullum --

MAY-MAY
(warningly)
Not too soon! You wait two months maybe -- then when your son really powerful hot to go to bed with Missee Brock ... then, you tell him.

FADE OUT

106 EXT. HONG KONG WATERFRONT DAY 106

A great clipper ship standing into the harbour across the sunlit water, the Noble House flag at her masthead. CUT to LS of the waterfront, a great bustle on the jetty, and CLOSE on STRUAN and CULLUM walking together, making their way to the jetty rail to watch the ship, Highland Cloud, drop anchor. CS of them together, STRUAN in mid-sentence, as he looks out to sea.

STRUAN
(reflectively)
... so if I loved a girl, I'm damned if I would wait a year to marry her -- whatever her father said. I'd elope.

CULLUM is regarding his father with astonishment.

CULLUM
(bewildered)
But ... but I thought you didn't want me to marry her.

106 Continued 106

STRUAN
I didn't. May-May changed my mind for me, a couple of months ago.

CULLUM
(still stunned, but beginning to beam)
Why didn't you tell me before?

STRUAN
If Brock knew I was in favour of this marriage, he'd forbid it. On principle. So I waited till your honeymoon ship came in from Calcutta. There she is -- Highland Cloud. Why not carry off your lady-love, cruise around for a few days? Tell Captain Perry I said he's to marry you. The hell with waiting a year ...

CULLUM's face has lit up with delight.

There'll be a new house ready for you when you get back ...
(turning away, tilting his hat)
Bless you, my children ...

CULLUM stands, delighted, for a moment, and then is off like a shot. CS of STRUAN looking after him in some amusement; then he heaves a contented sigh, and strolls along the jetty.

CUT TO

107 EXT. HIGHLAND CLOUD DAY 107

LS of HIGHLAND CLOUD putting out to sea, CULLUM and TESS together at the rail, seen through telescope.

CUT TO

108 INT. VERANDAH AND INTERIOR OF CLUB DAY 108

STRUAN straightening up from big mounted telescope on Club's verandah, looking satisfied as he turns into the Club itself. It is a huge, airy bungalow, dim and cool, comfortably furnished although still rather rough and ready. It has a fine brass-railed mahogany bar and the obligatory picture of the young Queen Victoria. Traders and gentlemen at the tables, GLESSING and COOPER playing at the billiard

108 Continued 108

table in a corner. STRUAN exchanges nods with them, sits, picks up The Times, and is served with a drink by the waiter.

COOPER
(nudging Glessing)
Saw Highland Cloud out in the bay, Tai-pan. There's a rumour your son Cullum has a most romantic cargo aboard her.

STRUAN
(deep in his paper)
Is that so? When are you marrying Shevaun Tillman?

COOPER
(sullenly)
As soon as she says 'yes'.

STRUAN
(innocently)
And Captain Glessing? Is Miss Mary Sinclair still down in Macao?

GLESSING
Yes, dammit! Haven't seen her in over two months now.

STRUAN
(smiling)
Young lovers aren't what they were when I was a --

Breaks off short, glancing up. His POV: GORTH BROCK striding furiously towards him across the room. GORTH halts in front of him, glaring down.

GORTH
(snarling)
You lousy Scotch bastard!

STRUAN
(impassively)
I take it this is a social call?

GORTH
(roaring)
Where's Tess, you son-of-a-bitch?

STRUAN
(still calm)
At sea, and if you call me that again I'll kill you.

108 Continued 108

GORTH
Your bloody Cullum's run off with her!

STRUAN
Well, Gorth, isn't that what you wanted?

GORTH
My Dad said they could wed in a year's time! Not before!

CS of STRUAN regarding him impassively, then glancing past him. STRUAN'S POV: BROCK appearing in the distant doorway. CUT to CS of STRUAN. His glance returns to GORTH, then he deliberately continues to study his paper as though GORTH weren't there. CS of GORTH livid. He is carrying a cane, and he suddenly slashes with it through STRUAN's paper, cutting a weal across his cheek. In BG BROCK stops, appalled, then comes slowly forward. STRUAN regards his wrecked newspaper for a moment, then closes it and quietly lays it aside. GORTH stands over him, quivering with fury. STRUAN looks up at him impassively.

GORTH
Choose your godrotting weapons!

STRUAN comes slowly to his feet, glances at BROCK, then back at GORTH.

STRUAN
(quietly)
Get yourself a cutlass.

GORTH wheels round, comes face to face with BROCK.

BROCK
(furious, scared for Gorth)
Ye bloody fool! Haven't I warned you? I know that devil --

GORTH
(bitterly contemptuous)
Aye, you do, Dad! So get out of my way and let a man do a man's job.

He brushes past his father, striding for the door. STRUAN looks after him, then at BROCK. When he speaks it is without malice, indeed it is almost with compassion.

108 Continued 108

STRUAN
(quietly)
Still think you've won, Tyler?

CUT TO

109 EXT. CLUB GARDEN DAY 109

CS of GORTH's hand, gripping a cutlass, the heavy, broad-bladed Navy sword with its brass-bound hilt. SHOT WIDENS as he swings it, limbering up. STRUAN, at a distance, holds another cutlass, rolls up his sleeve. Traders surround the lawn; COOPER, obviously reluctant, acts as umpire.

COOPER
(calling out)
First blood?

GORTH
First blood be damned! I'm goin' to kill the bastard!

CS BROCK, his face drawn. Then LS as STRUAN and GORTH face each other. CS of them, COOPER between them, holding the great curved blades apart.

COOPER
When I give the word you fight. And that's the last word I'll give.

CS GORTH, eyes gleaming, teeth bared. CS STRUAN, cold. COOPER steps quickly back.

Fight!

On the word, GORTH slashes furiously into attack; the blades grind and clang together as he drives STRUAN across the lawn, STRUAN guarding and parrying carefully. CS of GORTH eager for the kill, hacking furiously at STRUAN's head and shoulders, STRUAN ducking and weaving out of his way. GORTH rushes him bull-like the blades lock, and GORTH hurls him by main force against a tree. CS GORTH swinging, STRUAN side-stepping, the cutlass biting deep into the tree. CS of BROCK horrified, CS STRUAN smashing his hilt into GORTH's face. GORTH staggers back, his mouth bleeding, leaps in again. STRUAN thrusts, catches him in the left shoulder, blood springing to GORTH's shirt. He charges in, and STRUAN sidesteps and swings, GORTH parries but is cut on the right arm and sprawls, losing his weapon. CS STRUAN.

STRUAN
Get up!

109 Continued 109

CS GORTH scrabbling for his cutlass, lunging up at STRUAN, who parries and cuts in a movement, his point tearing across GORTH's shirt-front. As GORTH springs back STRUAN is after him like a cat, his cutlass darting everywhere, wounding GORTH on thigh, arm, and body. CS GORTH, teeth clenched, a shocking sight, soaked in blood, trying to parry as STRUAN's blade cuts him across the face. He shrieks and leaps back weeping with pain and rage, slashing blindly, as STRUAN pursues him remorselessly. CS of BROCK, his face old and drawn, his lips moving. LS of GORTH staggering away, slipping to his hands and knees. STRUAN stands over him.

STRUAN
(in a voice of ice)
Get up!

CS of GORTH rearing on to his knees, trying to cover himself with his blade. CS of STRUAN staring over his head at BROCK. CS of BROCK, his face grey. CS of STRUAN suddenly swinging up his arm, slashing down. Gasp from the spectators. CS of GORTH, cowering, STRUAN's cutlass quivering in the ground in front of him. LS as STRUAN turns and walks quickly off the lawn. GORTH crouches, weeping, as the others surround him, help him to lie down. CS of GORTH, tears and blood on his face.

GORTH
(choking)
Dad! Dad!

COOPER and others are bandaging his wounds. CS BROCK as he kneels beside his son.

BROCK
(his voice hoarse)
Lie still son. You said your-self, it's goin' to be a man's job.

His face is set like flint as he helps with his son's wounds.

CUT TO

110 EXT. STRUAN'S HOUSE NIGHT 110

STRUAN walking through the garden, up the steps of his house, slow and tired. He opens the front door.

CUT TO

111 INT. STRUAN'S HOUSE NIGHT 111

He tosses aside his hat, taps the barometer, rubs his eyes, and calls quietly: 'May-May'. When there is no reply he calls again, 'May-May', crossing towards the door to his outer room. There is the sound of running feet, the door opens and the old SERVANT WOMAN appears, in evident distress. She stops, weeping and inarticulate at the sight of STRUAN, but before he can speak GORDON CHEN appears in the doorway behind the old woman.

GORDON
(rapidly)
Pardon, Tai-pan. They looked for you this afternoon, and Master Cullum, but could not find you. So they came to me ...

STRUAN
(alarmed)
What's wrong? Where's May-May?

The SERVANT WOMAN starts to wail, as STRUAN strides towards the door.

GORDON
Please, Tai-pan ... your lady May-May. She is ill ... very ill ...
(trying to prevent Struan)
... please, the doctor is with her now, he is making his examination ...

STRUAN brushes him aside. CUT to him striding across outer room, throwing open inner door, checking on the threshold. His POV: the inner room, faintly lit. In the shadows, the form of MAY-MAY faintly seen on the bed. Sitting beside it, his hand on her wrist, a very ancient Chinese DOCTOR. He glances briefly round as STRUAN strides in, halts beside him. CS of MAY-MAY, her eyes closed, her face and hair soaked in sweat, her teeth chattering violently. CS of STRUAN appalled.

STRUAN
(husky with alarm)
What's the matter with her?

GORDON
(at his elbow)
He speaks no English. She has been like this two hours now. He says ... he says it is the Happy Valley fever.

111 Continued 111

STRUAN
(in a whisper)
Malaria.
(rounding on Gordon)
Get a British doctor! Get him now!

GORDON
(distraught)
She refused! She would not! Please, Tai-pan, it is best! British doctors cannot cure it! They will purge her, and she will die!

CS of MAY-MAY moaning in her delirium. As STRUAN starts forward the DOCTOR turns his head and speaks rapidly in Chinese. STRUAN rounds on GORDON CHEN.

STRUAN
What's he saying?

GORDON
(licking his lips)
That the fever will come every four days, for twelve days. He says a strong man can survive all the attacks, but she is a woman ... and she was ... with child ...

STRUAN stares at him aghast.

GORDON
(nodding)
You ... you didn't know?

STRUAN turns away slowly, trying to absorb the shock. After a moment, he turns to GORDON.

STRUAN
Has he any cure?

GORDON shrugs helplessly, and STRUAN suddenly grabs his arm.

Does he know anything about the quinine drug? Ask him, damn you!

GORDON speaks to the DOCTOR in Chinese; the DOCTOR replies while STRUAN listens intently.

GORDON
He says the quinine bark exists - he himself used it many years ago ...
(as Struan reacts eagerly)
... but there is none now. He's right - my people have been searching, Tai-pan ..

111 Continued 111

STRUAN turns to look at MAY-MAY. His POV: MAY-MAY moaning softly, unconscious, but no longer in the grip of a fever spasm. STRUAN kneels down by the bed, takes her hand. The DOCTOR, seated beside him, says something in Chinese to GORDON CHEN. As the CAMERA stays on STRUAN and MAY-MAY, GORDON speaks over, translating.

GORDON (V.O)
He says the quinine drug came from the bark of a tree in Peru. The Spaniards called it the Jesuits' bark - but that was a long time ago ...

CUT TO :

CS of MAY-MAY. She turns her head, her eyes open slowly, and she smiles faintly.

MAY-MAY
(in a whisper)
Hullo, Tai-pan. Your old woman awfu' sick.

STRUAN
(stooping over her)
Hullo, May-May.

MAY-MAY
(faintly)
You - better get - yourself new lassie. This one - no' verra weel ...

STRUAN
You're going to be fine. How d'you feel?

MAY-MAY
Cold ... cold ... oh, Tai-pan!
(She whimpers softly, holding his hand)
Maybe ... you find medicine ... for old woman ... should be Chinese medicine ... never mind ...

STRUAN bites his lip, tears in his eyes. As she closes her eyes, he gently withdraws his hand and gets up, turning away. He is moving to the doorway when suddenly he stiffens, then turns swiftly on GORDON CHEN.

STRUAN
(sharply)
The quinine bark! What did you call it a moment ago? Jesuit's bark? Why?

111 Continued 111

GORDON
(bewildered)
The doctor said ... the Roman Catholic Jesuit fathers used it, in South America ...

STRUAN
(eyes alight)
There's a Jesuit mission in Macao! Have your agents asked them?

GORDON
I don't know. I ...

But STRUAN is already away, striding into the outer room, whipping open a desk drawer, CS of his hands working at top speed, pouring a stream of guineas into a bag, which he pockets, then snatching up an early Paterson pistol which he checks, and thrusts into his waistband. The drawer slams shut, and he strides to the door.

CUT TO:

112 EXT. OPEN SEA DAY 112

China Cloud, under sail, running before the wind.

CUT TO:

113 EXT. DECK OF CHINA CLOUD DAY 113

STRUAN at quarter-deck rail, looking up at sails. Beside him ORLOV.

CUT TO:

114 EXT. OPEN SEA DAY 114

The wake of China Cloud as she surges ahead towards the setting sun.

CUT TO:

115 INT. JESUIT MISSION MACAO DAY 115

A vast flagged hall with stone columns and lofty arched roof hidden in shadows. STRUAN being conducted into the hall by a LAY BROTHER, their footsteps echoing in the emptiness. As they advance, a door at the head of a flight of stone steps

115 Continued 115

opens, and the robed figure of the BISHOP appears - tall, middle aged, austere, and as strong a man as STRUAN himself. STRUAN is out of his element here; his upbringing revolts at having to seek help from the Church of Rome, but he needs the drug desperately. His attitude is a curious mixture of hostility and forced politeness which the BISHOP understands very well. Sunlight is filtering through from the window beside the bishop's door; he glances at it.

BISHOP
I thank you for such an awakening. The dawn is very beautiful.
(Coming down steps)
Why does the Tai-pan of the Noble House seek my help?
(a slight smile)
Papist help?

STRUAN
(grimly)
I don't seek it willingly. I need the quinine drug - Jesuit's bark.

BISHOP
Ah. You have Happy Valley fever.

STRUAN
(bluntly)
Myself, no. One who is very dear to me. Do you have the cure?

BISHOP
You will think it is a Jesuitical answer ... but I don't know if we have it or not.

STRUAN
(head up)
I'm ready to pay. Any price you ask. If you want my soul, you can have that - I'll turn Catholic, even, for what that's worth ...

BISHOP
Dear me. You are obviously in desperate need. And for a supplicant, your manners are ... curious.

STRUAN
(flatly)
I'm here as a trader. State your price.

115 Continued 115

BISHOP
I am not sure that the ... ah, shop, is open. We may not have the commodity you require in stock. I must make inquiry among our healers.

STRUAN
I'll wait.

BISHOP
It will not be necessary. Everyone in Macao knows by now that the Tai-pan is here. My messengers will find you - possibly by tracking down the aroma of Protestant piety.

STRUAN stiffens imperceptibly, returning the BISHOP's look, then nods briefly and turns away.

BISHOP
(raising hand in benediction, with mock diffidence)
Go with God ... my son?

STRUAN goes out, leaving the BISHOP smiling reflectively.

CUT TO:

116 EXT. JESUIT MISSION DAY 116

STRUAN emerging, being surrounded by beggars and suppliants begging for alms. He looks at them, glances up at the Jesuit badge over the door, breathes heavily, and takes money from his pocket, handing it out, finally scattering it over the heads of the little crowd. As they scatter and he turns away, a CHINESE WOMAN stops him.

WOMAN
(catching his arm)
Tai-pan! Tai-pan, you come with me to lady Mary!

STRUAN realises that she is the Chinese woman who admitted him to MARY's house in Scene 20.

STRUAN
Miss Mary Sinclair?

WOMAN
Please, Tai-pan - you come see her now.

She turns away, and STRUAN follows immediately.

CUT TO:

117 INT. MARY'S HOUSE INNER ROOM DAY 117

CS of beaded curtain being drawn back, WOMAN admitting STRUAN, who advances smiling into the room as WOMAN effaces herself. closing curtain. His POV: at far side of the room MARY is standing by the window, facing him. She looks composed, but a trifle pale.

MARY
(quietly)
Hullo, Tai-pan!

STRUAN
(advancing)
Mary! How are you? Where have you been hiding this past two months?
(Takes her hand, pauses frowning)
You haven't been ill?

MARY
(with assumed lightness)
No, not at all. I've just been a lady in retirement, lately. Why - have I changed?

STRUAN
(slightly puzzled)
No-o ... but you look a little tired and ...

He glances round the room; the mirrors, silk cushions, and exotic decorations have gone, and it is plainly but comfortably furnished. MARY, with the ghost of a smile, follows his glance.

MARY
... and rather more respectable than I was the last time you were here?
Yes. But I'm perfectly well.

STRUAN knows something is wrong, but he gives no sign of it. He looks down at her, smiling.

STRUAN
(warmly)
I'm glad. When are you coming back to Hong Kong? George Glessing misses you.

MARY
(nervously)
I miss him.
(a little pause)
I'm going to marry him - you know that?

117 Continued 117

STRUAN
(smiling)
So why are you hiding yourself in Macao?

MARY
(steeling herself)
I had to, Tai-pan.

STRUAN frowns a question, and then stares in amazement as MARY draws back a curtain close by. Their POV: an alcove containing a cradle, and a tiny, plainly Oriental baby alseep.

STRUAN
(in a hushed voice)
When did this ... happen?

MARY
Two weeks ago. Now you know why I hid in Macao.

STRUAN
(after a shocked pause)
Whose child ... who's the father?

MARY
(with a touch of her old self)
Take your choice. I don't know. You warned me it might happen, remember? And it did.
(takes a deep breath)
At first, I thought I'd go mad ... now, I feel almost ... glad, sometimes. Odd, isn't it?

STRUAN
(quietly)
How many people know?

MARY
My woman, the midwife, the wet-nurse. You and I. George Glessing must never know.
(emphatically)
Never. Because he and I are going to be married.

STRUAN senses the fierceness behind the words, and decides not to argue. He considers her for a moment.

117 Continued 117

STRUAN
And what are you going to do with the child?

MARY
I'm going to have him adopted. Safely and secretly, by a foster parent who will love him and look after ...

STRUAN
(in protest)
In China? You can't abandon him to some child-farmer ...

MARY
His foster-parent will not be a Chinese. He'll be the Tai-pan.

And before STRUAN can reply she holds out her hand and opens it. CS of a broken coin on her palm. CS of STRUAN as he looks at it, then at MARY. There is a long silence, then he turns away, then looks back at her.

MARY
(suddenly trembling, her words tumble out in an almost hysterical stream)
You'll promise to raise him as if he were your own son, and cherish him, and educate him, and ... and ... swear never to tell anyone whose child he is ... and ... and ...
(suddenly she breaks down, sinks into a chair, sobbing)
Oh, Tai-pan, Tai-pan! I'm sorry! I feel unclean, and hateful ... but there's no one else! No one! No one!

She crouches, sobbing. STRUAN comes to stand over her.

STRUAN
(quietly)
Of course there isn't, Mary.
(he touches her head)
Don't cry, child. I'll take care of him.

She looks up at him, holding back her tears, and then takes his hand and holds it against her face, leaning on him. Then abruptly she turns back to the cot, drying her tears, and picks up the baby. She holds it a moment, then moves to STRUAN.

MARY
Please, take him today ... now. Before I ...

117 Continued 117

STRUAN
(taking the baby)
I'll take him back to Hong Kong in China Cloud.
(he reaches with his free hand, takes the coin from her)
You didn't need this, you know.
(He kisses her gently on the forehead)
Poor old Jin-Qua. His first two coins ... wasted ...

CUT TO:

118 INT. JESUIT MISSION DAY 118

CS of BABY, wrapped in shawl. As SHOT WIDENS, STRUAN is seen standing holding child in the great stone hall. It is crowded with Chinese - beggars, sick people, cripples, etc., waiting for the BISHOP. The BABY stirs and wails; STRUAN, uncertain what to do, shakes it gently, to the covert amusement of the nearest Chinese. The crying continues; a CHINESE WOMAN hesitantly offers to take the BABY, but STRUAN shakes his head, ignoring the curious stares of those around him.

CUT TO:

Stone steps, a CHINESE PRIEST descending, scanning the crowd. When his eye lights on STRUAN, the PRIEST registers surprise at the sight of the BABY; however, he beckons STRUAN, who comes forward and follows him up the stone steps and through the door at the top.

CUT TO:

118A INT. BISHOP'S ROOM DAY 118A

As STRUAN enters, the PRIEST standing aside to let him pass, the BISHOP is seen seated at his table in the middle of the large, sparely-furnished room. White-washed walls, high narrow windows, a great crucifix on the wall, two tall candles on the table, rough mats on the floor. A SECRETARY stands at the BISHOP'S elbow, and the PRIEST goes to stand on his other side. STRUAN stands with what dignity he can, holding the BABY, which wails feebly; at the sound the BISHOP, who has been writing, looks up in surprise, lays down his pen, and surveys STRUAN and the BABY.

118A Continued 118A

BISHOP
I trust this ... is not the patient?

STRUAN
No.

His tone discourages inquiry. The BISHOP, after a perplexed pause, decides that the BABY is STRUAN's business, and holds out his hand for a small box given to him by the SECRETARY. The BISHOP opens it, and pushes it across the table towards STRUAN, who steps closer, holding the BABY awkwardly.

CUT TO:

CS of dried bark in the box as the BISHOP speaks.

BISHOP (V.O.)
This is the quinine bark. All that we possess - perhaps all there is in China. Brew it into a tea, and administer it twice each day ...

The BISHOP pauses as the BABY wails louder. Seeing that STRUAN has no idea what to do, the BISHOP, after a moment's hesitation, gets up, comes round the table, and without a word takes the BABY, gentling it and murmuring to it. The crying stops. SECRETARY and PRIEST shoot the BISHOP admiring looks; the PRIEST crosses himself. The BISHOP continues his instructions about the quinine, indicating the box on the table, and continuing to nurse the baby at the same time; towards the end of his speech he will hand the baby back to STRUAN.

BISHOP
A few hours after the drug has been given, the fever should subside, but you must keep repeating the dose for several days ...
(handing the baby carefully to Struan)
Careful ... don't squeeze ... there. Forgive my curiosity, but is this child your own?

STRUAN uneasily cradles the BABY in one arm, and with his free hand accepts the quinine box which the BISHOP now holds out to him.

STRUAN
By adoption. I'm not the father.
(taking the box)
There's the matter of payment ...

118A Continued 118A

He is interrupted by renewed wailing from the BABY.

BISHOP
Has it been fed recently?

STRUAN
Yes, an hour ago. The price of this drug ...

BISHOP
And changed? The child.

STRUAN
Changed?

BISHOP
(patiently)
Its undergarments.

STRUAN
(nonplussed)
I ... I don't know ...

BISHOP
Then part of the price is that you promise to hire a nurse immediately.
(as Struan blinks)
There are some things beyond even the skill of a Tai-pan. You may make further payment for the drug by forming a company to discover it in quantity and market it to the world.

STRUAN
I'll do that.

BISHOP
But first ... a nurse, as soon as possible. And in the meantime, may I suggest that you hold the child's head above the level of its feet? It will be ... quieter ...

STRUAN hastily adjusts the BABY's position; the wailing decreases. STRUAN draws himself up to depart.

STRUAN
Thank you ... my lord.

BISHOP
Go with God ... my children.

118A Continued 118A

STRUAN turns and goes. The PRIEST comes up beside the BISHOP, who is watching STRUAN's departure with twitching lips.

PRIEST
(in shocked tones)
That child will be brought up as a heretic.

BISHOP
That is the least of its troubles at the moment.

CUT TO:

118B EXT. CHINA CLOUD DAY 118B

STRUAN, BABY on one arm, box in the other hand, strides up the gangplank, followed by a CHINESE NURSE, who is evidently alarmed for the BABY, and keeps offering to take it. STRUAN ignores her, striding ahead, shouting as he comes.

STRUAN
Mr Orlov!

As he strides to the quarterdeck ladder, the SEAMEN stare in disbelief. MS as ORLOV meets STRUAN at head of ladder. The BABY wails, and STRUAN allows the NURSE to take it. ORLOV regards this deadpan.

STRUAN
(to Orlov)
Prepare to cast off.
(Calling to Nurse)
Keep its head higher than its feet!
Well, Mr Orlov, what are you waiting for?

ORLOV strides off, roaring 'Prepare to cast off!' STRUAN moves to the forward rail. CUT to his POV: SEAMEN watching him in astonishment, one or two in amusement. They hurriedly go about their duties as the mates are heard yelling 'Cast off! Hands to the capstan!' CS of STRUAN watching them grimly.

CUT TO:

119 EXT. OPEN SEA DAY 119

China Cloud under full sail, driving east for Hong Kong. Islands in view either side.

CUT TO:

120 INT. STRUAN'S CABIN DAY 120

CS of MARY'S BABY, round its neck the broken coin on a thin chain. SHOT WIDENS to show BABY in arms of CHINESE NURSE, STRUAN smiling and turning away to place the box of quinine bark in a wall locker, which he locks. At that moment there is a roar from the decks above: 'Sail ho!', at which he lifts his head. But he is turning away to his desk when he is brought up short by ORLOV's bellow: 'All hands on deck! Mr McKay, beat to quarters!' STRUAN makes straight for the door, to be met by an excited SEAMAN.

SEAMAN
(in alarm)
Tai-pan, come quickly!

STRUAN is past him and up the ladder.

CUT TO

121 EXT. DECK OF CHINA CLOUD DAY 121

STRUAN emerging on main deck, racing for the quarter-deck ladder, where he pauses for a second.

STRUAN
(shouting)
What is it, Orlov?

MS of ORLOV, pointing ahead. CS STRUAN turning. His POV: The islands ahead of China Cloud. Round the nearest cape a pirate galley is standing into the Channel, with another close behind. CS of the leader's mainsail, showing the silver stork emblem, the deck and platforms crowded with fighting men, the second galley seen in BG astern of her. CS of WU KWOK on stern-castle. CS of STRUAN staring ahead. LS of quarter-deck, ORLOV snapping into action.

ORLOV
(roaring)
Port your helm! Stand by to go about!

STRUAN
(roaring)
Belay that! Hold your course!

ORLOV
(protesting)
You can't fight 'em, Tai-pan!
We can outrun them back to Macao!
That's Wu Kwok!

121 Continued 121

STRUAN
(beside Orlov, eyeing the pirates)
I know who it is, Mr Orlov, and I haven't got time to run. We're driving through them to Hong Kong!
(cupping his hands)
Mr McKay, clear for action!

ORLOV
(pointing)
You won't drive far with one of those in our timbers!

Their POV: CS of the leading pirate, her huge steel ram glittering in the sunlight, her pennons streaming and her oars thrashing the water as she forges ahead.

STRUAN
Then we'll have to sink 'em at a distance, Mr Orlov. You'll fight the ship.

ORLOV
Oh, I'll fight her. But unless another clipper comes down from Hong Kong we're dead men!

But STRUAN is away, leaping down the ladder to where the gun-crews are running out the guns. Ordered bedlam on China Cloud's decks as she prepares for action. CS POWDER BOY running barefoot with charges, CS SEAMAN unlashing tackles, CS McKAY roaring 'Up ports!' CS gun muzzle with rammer thrusting in cartridge, then ball being tipped in and wad rammed home. CS STRUAN shouting: 'Run out!' LS down main-deck as crews heave on the tackles, CS of SEAMAN heaving, LS down side of muzzles emerging from ports.

CUT TO:

122 EXT. WU KWOK'S FLAGSHIP DAY 122

WU KWOK on stern castle, yelling in Chinese. CS of antique cannon being loaded and run out below platforms on which the mob of armed pirates are yelling and brandishing their weapons. CS of catapult being bent back beside brazier, oil-soaked missile being laid in its bed.

CUT TO:

123 EXT. PANORAMIC SHOT OPEN SEA DAY 123

An aerial SHOT FROM ABOVE AND BEHIND CHINA CLOUD, showing her running down towards the galleys. The second galley has now come up abreast of the first, the Silver Stork, and they are preparing to diverge either side of China Cloud.

LS from sea-level as a galley sweeps past, her beak gleaming, oars churning away, pirates crowding her platforms. WIDE SHOT from sea level of the two galleys tearing towards CAMERA.

CUT TO

124 EXT. SEA-BATTLE DAY 124

LS down China Cloud's main-deck, showing crews crouched by guns, STRUAN waiting. CS of STRUAN glancing aft. His POV: ORLOV at the elbow of the men at the wheel. CS STRUAN as silence falls on the China Cloud, his head turning. His POV: first, Silver Stork advancing towards his port bow; then the second galley off his starboard beam, turning in towards the clipper. CS of WU KWOK yelling orders in Chinese. CS of PIRATE BOSUN yelling. LS of PIRATE ROWERS slackening speed. LS of oars slowing down. CS STRUAN, eyes narrowing. LS of second galley, its beak pointing straight at China Cloud. CS STRUAN.

STRUAN
(calling calmly)
Stand by all. Mr McKay, lay your aim for the waterline.

As McKAY, by the starboard guns, calls 'Aye, aye, sir!' CUT to CS of WU KWOK barking an order. CUT to CS of PIRATE hammering war-gong. CUT to PIRATE ROWERS hurling themselves at oars, raising the beat. CUT to LS of oars thrashing the water. CUT to LS from China Cloud's side of second galley charging in. CUT to AERIAL SHOT SHOWING SECOND GALLEY surging in towards China Cloud while Silver Stork, on the other side of the clipper, advances more steadily. CUT to PIRATE slashing catapult cord as missile is lit. CUT to second catapult firing. CUT to LS of second galley advancing, three or four flaming missiles soaring ahead of her. LS down deck of China Cloud as missile descends with a deafening whoosh and explodes in burning fragments on her forecastle. MEN scatter, yells and screams. MS STRUAN leaping forward with boarding pike, heaving a lump of burning rubbish overboard. CS STRUAN. LS ORLOV on quarter-deck.

ORLOV
(roaring)
Fire-buckets, McKay! Get the hoses on it!

MEN rush with buckets, PUMPING CREW turn hose on fire, as STRUAN runs back to join McKAY at the starboard guns.

124 Continued 124

STRUAN
(yelling)
Steady! Hold your fire!

LS along cannon, through gun-port, at galley tearing towards them, ram gleaming. CS sweating face of GUNNER, working the elevation of his gun with a handspike, muttering 'If-I-wasn't-a-born-bloody-fool-I-wouldn't-be-here', CS from GALLEY's prow as she surges in on China Cloud, CS STRUAN staring over the rail, counting, suddenly roaring 'Fire!' CS side of China Cloud erupting in flame. LS down her deck as the guns recoil, men leap with swabs and rammers. LS of galley shuddering under the impact of the broadside, half a dozen oars on one side sheared away, huge splinters flying up from her rail, bodies falling from her platforms. But the galley still comes on. CS of STRUAN among the gunners, yelling as they reload in the swirling smoke. CS GUN CREW running out reloaded gun, FAVOURING GUNNER as he heaves on the tackles, his face coming up into CS, his eyes widening in horror at what he sees. His POV: the huge glittering beak of the galley, the platforms crowded with PIRATES, rushing into CAMERA. CS of ORLOV staring: his POV: LS down deck of China Cloud, the pirate galley's bow crashing into her. CS of the steel ram shearing into her hull below the rail. LS of galley jammed into China Cloud, spars and sails falling, men going down, pirates surging from her platforms into the rigging and over the rail of the clipper. CS STRUAN.

STRUAN
(bellowing in the din)
Carronades! Fire!

CS of quarter-deck rail, ORLOV and SEAMEN touching off the carronades, sweeping China Cloud's rail with a hail of grape. LS of pirate vanguard being swept away in the hail of fire, STRUAN and his SEAMEN leaping into the smoke with cutlasses and pikes. CS of hand-to-hand struggle in the smoke - yelling faces, white and yellow, STRUAN laying about him, SEAMAN stabbing PIRATE with pike, another PIRATE grappling SEAMAN, falling with him into sea, GUNNER yelling as he fires his cannon into the galley at pointblank range, McKAY lifting PIRATE bodily, hurling him over rail, SEAMEN firing muskets into the press, more PIRATES leaping into the shrouds, STRUAN wrestling and stabbing an opponent, ORLOV touching off carronade again, PIRATES being swept from their platform. GENERAL SHOT from above China Cloud as the galley's ram slowly withdraws and she drifts away. LS down decks of the mêlée, SEAMEN driving remaining PIRATES over the rail, cheering and yelling. CS STRUAN lunging with his cutlass, straightening, staring round - a sudden crashing impact sends him staggering to the deck.

CUT TO

124 Continued 124

LS towards bow of China Cloud, WU KWOK's flagship crashing into her, PIRATES leaping to the forecastle. SEAMEN on the focsle rush to meet them. CS of flagship's ram grinding through the rail of China Cloud, shearing it away. MS of SEAMEN and PIRATES struggling on the focslehead. CUT TO STRUAN leading a charge of SEAMEN to the focsle, driving the PIRATES back as WU KWOK's flagship tears clear of China Cloud. CS bow carronades being touched off by SEAMEN, CUT to devastating hail of shot striking platforms of flagship, PIRATES toppling into sea. MS on bows of China Cloud of mêlée between STRUAN's SEAMEN and flagship PIRATES. The starboard rail of China Cloud is burning fiercely where the fireball struck; while STRUAN'S MEN are driving the last of the flagship PIRATES overside, McKAY and PARTY are vainly trying to stem the blaze. The pirate flagship (Silver Stork) has drifted clear.

LS of main-deck of pirate flagship, WU KWOK racing forward, shouting directions to his gunners. CS of long brass cannon with dragon's head being run out, SHOT WIDENS as two similar long guns are run out on the flagship, shattering crash as they fire; CUT to LS of China Cloud's bows being battered by the shot, her hull splintering just above the waterline. CS STRUAN and SEAMEN at bow carronades, firing on flagship. LS of flagship's deck, her gunners running out their long dragon's-head guns, letting fly another broad-side. LS of China Cloud and flagship pouring fire into each other, China Cloud staggering under the beating, her foremast starting to topple. CS STRUAN looking up; his POV: the descending mast. CS STRUAN leaping away, LS down deck as foremast falls, in a welter of canvas and cordage, smashing down across the focsle. Utter confusion on China Cloud's deck as the broadside strikes home, splinters flying, men going down. AERIAL SHOT shows position: China Cloud, battered and shrouded in smoke, her bows burning. About twenty yards off her bows the pirate flagship is pounding away at her with heavy guns. Astern of China Cloud the second galley is firing on China Cloud, and is preparing to ram her a second time.

LS down deck of second pirate galley, her rowers on one side heaving to turn her, her COMMANDER on sterncastle yelling and pointing. His POV: China Cloud, and in FG the prow and ram of his own galley turning to point at the clipper. Galley's bow guns are firing at China Cloud's stern.

LS STRUAN, running, staggering across deck, making for the hatchway and disappearing.

CUT TO

125 INT. STRUAN'S CABIN DAY 125

Ruin and chaos as STRUAN bursts in. The NURSE is crouched against a bulkhead, clutching the BABY; the stern windows have been shattered, and through them STRUAN can see the second galley sweeping round in a great arc to renew the attack. He drags the woman to her feet, holds her as he tears open the locker, seizes the quinine box, and urges the woman out.

CUT TO

126 EXT. MAIN DECK CHINA CLOUD DAY 126

Tremendous confusion, smoke, wreckage, as STRUAN emerges, thrusts the woman to a safe place beneath a ladder, giving her the box, then turns to confront ORLOV. CS ORLOV and STRUAN.

ORLOV
(shouting)
They're pounding us to bits, Tai-pan!

A shot crashes into the rail, sending them staggering. CS of STRUAN as he pulls himself to his feet, stares round at his wrecked vessel. Forward WU KWOK's flagship is firing on her; astern the second galley is slowly coming round, close to one of the islands. ORLOV scrambles up beside STRUAN, staring astern; suddenly his eyes widen and he yells as he grips STRUAN's arm.

ORLOV
Look, Tai-pan! Look!

126 Continued 126

Round the island headland comes a clipper ship, under a towering mass of canvas, the Union Jack at her peak, bearing down towards the second galley. CS STRUAN and ORLOV watching her in amazement.

ORLOV
(exultant)
Glory be! Oh, by God, look at her! Sink the bastards!

LS as they watch the clipper running down on the galley, drawing level with her - but not firing. She bears on, making for China Cloud. CS of ORLOV staring in disbelief.

ORLOV
(apalled)
What the hell's she doing! She isn't firing! Is her skipper bloody crazy?

LS of the new clipper tearing down on China Cloud, preparing to come abreast of her. CS of STRUAN, his face grimed with sweat and powder smoke, his eyes fixed on her.

STRUAN
No - he's not crazy. He knows exactly what he's doing. He's been getting ready to do it for thirty years.

ORLOV stares at him in bewilderment. CUT to LS of new clipper, drawing beam to beam with China Cloud. CS as her gunports crash up, and the gun-muzzles sprout from her sides. PAN along the row of muzzles, and up to the quarter-deck, where BROCK is seen at the quarter-deck rail ... CS of BROCK, his face like stone. His POV: the battered wreck of China Cloud, STRUAN at her rail, and ahead of her WU KWOK's flagship, still firing into her. CS of BROCK.

BROCK
(shouting)
Stand by, starboard guns! Wait for the word!

CUT to CS of STRUAN, awaiting the broadside.

STRUAN
(almost to himself)
God damn you.

126 Continued 126

CUT to CS BROCK, his hand raised. LS from behind him of China Cloud defenceless, BROCK with his hand up to give the signal. Sudden silence as his ship, White Witch, passes China Cloud. CS BROCK, his hand cutting down as he roars: 'Fire!' LS along White Witch's side as her broadside crashes out at WU KWOK's flagship. LS of flagship's deck as the storm of shot sweeps across her, splinters and spars flying, a gun torn from its mountings, bodies falling, her great crimson sail billowing down in a tangle of cordage. CS of WU KWOK yelling orders in a frenzy. LS of White Witch coming about. CS of her port battery suddenly bursting into flame. LS of flagship shuddering under shock, her mainmast toppling, her hull beginning to list. CS of BROCK among his gun-crews, roaring 'Fire as your guns bear!' LS down White Witch's side as her broadside explodes again. CS of WU KWOK swept away by the blast across his quarterdeck. CS of STRUAN, exhausted, holding on to the rail, staring deadpan across the water. His POV: White Witch gliding by, CS of BROCK mounting his quarterdeck ladder, pausing to look across to China Cloud, his face scowling as ever. He turns to summon a SEAMAN. CUT to CS STRUAN. From behind him comes the wail of a baby. He turns to look across the wreckage-strewn deck; the NURSE is crouched beneath the ladder, clutching the child and the quinine box. Men are moving slowly on the deck; the moans of the wounded and the mutter of voices sounds on the ship. ORLOV's voice rouses STRUAN from his state of near-shock.

ORLOV (V.O.)
White Witch is signalling, Tai-pan!
He is going to heave us a tow-line!

CS of STRUAN.

STRUAN
Very good, Mr Orlov.

CUT TO:

127 INT. STRUAN'S HOUSE INNER ROOM NIGHT 127

CS of cup in hands of the CHINESE DOCTOR. As SHOT WIDENS he is using a spoon to administer the liquid to MAY-MAY, who is lying semi-conscious on her pillows. CS of STRUAN watching, his face lined and tired. Beyond the bed is GORDON CHEN. CS of MAY-MAY again, eyes still closed. The DOCTOR sets down the cup, takes her pulse, talks in Chinese to GORDON.

GORDON
(to Struan)
He thinks the fever is less. In the morning he will know.

127 Continued 127

STRUAN comes closer to the bed. The DOCTOR takes up his basket, bows, and withdraws with GORDON. STRUAN sits on the edge of the bed, takes MAY-MAY's hand and touches her forehead with his fingers, watching her as she sleeps. He stands up, turns down the lamp, and leaves the room.

CUT TO:

128 INT. STRUAN'S HOUSE OUTER ROOM NIGHT 128

STRUAN enters from inner room. CULLUM, on edge, is waiting.

CULLUM
(quickly)
How's May-May?

STRUAN
(in a tired voice)
Better, I think. The quinine seems to work, thank God ...
(Rubbing his eyes wearily)
And if it saves her, it can save Hong Kong ...
(Making an effort to shrug off his weariness and sound more cheerful)
But where's Tess? My new daughter-in-law?

CULLUM
(slightly breathless)
Tess is with her mother. Brock refuses to see us, of course - he's still in a great fury because we eloped ... I can understand that ...
(bracing himself)
But I'm damned if I can understand him and you!
(with sudden heat)
Look, the whole island knows what happened out there today! Brock saved your life, and towed your ship home. And they're saying that you and he haven't exchanged a word since!

He pauses, waiting for contradiction, while STRUAN fills two glasses from a decanter.

STRUAN
Does that surprise you?

128 Continued 128

CULLUM
(bewildered)
Surprise me? Father, he saved you! I don't know why, and I don't care - I don't see that it matters ... but he saved you!
(helplessly)
Doesn't that mean anything? Doesn't it prove anything to you?

STRUAN
(calmly, seating himself)
It proves that Tyler Brock is a bloody good gunner.
(tastes his drink)

CULLUM
(violently)
Is that all you can say? Haven't you any feelings of ... well, gratitude?

STRUAN
Should I?

CULLUM
(exploding)
Oh, you're not credible! For thirty years you and Brock have done your damnedest to destroy each other - God knows what it's cost you both in money, and God knows what it's cost in human lives -- and today when Wu Kwok has you by the throat ... Will you tell me that even after what Brock did -- even with Tess and me married -- this senseless, rotten feud has got to go on? In the name of reason -- why?

STRUAN
(quietly)
Reason has very little to do with it. Tell me, Cullum...
(setting down his glass)
... do you believe I should thank Brock for what he did today? D'you think he'd want me to? D'you really suppose he did it out of friendship?

CULLUM
(witheringly)
Well, I hardly think it was out of mortal hatred!

128 Continued 128

STRUAN
Don't you, though? Well, then, Cullum, you don't understand Brock, and by God you don't understand me!
(getting to his feet)
But he does - which is why he's sent me a message. Read it.

He hands CULLUM a paper, and as a window shutter blows gently open, STRUAN moves across to close it.

CULLUM
(reading)
'Struan. If you wish ... I meet you on the hill at sunrise ... with a fighting-iron in my hand. T. Brock.'

STRUAN
(turning towards Cullum)
Oh, yes, Brock understands me. And you think we're two men who can be at peace?

STRUAN crosses to the barometer on the wall. CULLUM, pale and angry, follows him with his eyes. STRUAN taps the barometer.

CULLUM
(bitterly)
And of course you'll be there! For the sake of your selfish pride and fear of losing face! And one of you will kill the other. That's how it will end?

STRUAN
(half smiling)
That's a question Brock and I have been asking ourselves for the best part of a lifetime... glass is falling ...
(taps the glass again)
You see, Cullum, real hatred isn't a simple thing. Your saints, and ministers of God - they hate the Devil, don't they?
(turning to face Cullum)
But they'd be lost without him.

STRUAN turns on his heel and goes out.

CUT TO:

129 EXT. THE HILL DAWN 129

CS of a man's legs and boots, a fighting-iron hanging from his hand. SHOT WIDENS to show that it is BROCK, his coat tight-buttoned against the morning chill. LS of his POV: the new town below him in the grey light, ships at anchor in the misty dawn, the first of the sun coming up in the east.

At the foot of the hill a figure approaching. LS uphill of BROCK, erect, waiting, the CAMERA TRACKING in on him with STRUAN's approach. His footsteps halt. CUT to CS of STRUAN in his pea-jacket, a fighting-iron in his hand. They look at each other in silence, finally broken by BROCK.

BROCK
(harshly)
What happened yesterday makes no odds. Understand? You don't owe me a damned thing, Struan - an' if you tried to thank me for savin' your lousy life I'd spit in your face. I tell you that so's you understand we're even, an' nothing's changed!
(shakes out fighting-iron)
So we can settle things wi' a clean slate, once for all!

STRUAN
(eyeing him steadily)
If you want me settled, why didn't you let Wu Kwok do it?

BROCK
(grinning scornfully)
Would you - if you'd been in my shoes? Let some lousy Chink pirate do it for you? Not you Struan ...
(his temper boiling over)
... an' by God. not me!

On the last word BROCK leaps, swinging his fighting-iron. CS as STRUAN leaps back, the spiked ball tearing a great furrow across the front of his jacket. CS BROCK crouched, sneering, then CS of STRUAN, suddenly berserk, slashing with his fighting-iron. MS of the two face to face as the irons clash together, inter-twining and then tearing apart as the two spring back and circle warily, eyeing each other. CS BROCK, tense and ready. CS of STRUAN.

STRUAN
(quietly, watching him like a hawk)
You're a liar, Brock. You saved me because you owed it to me -

129 Continued 129

BROCK slashes at his head, and STRUAN ducks, circling away.

BROCK
(snarling)
What the hell did I ever owe you?

STRUAN stops circling, lowering his fighting-iron.

STRUAN
(steadily)
A life. Your son's life. I could have killed Gorth in a fair duel, but I didn't.

BROCK is still now, staring at STRUAN. His mouth works, and when he speaks his voice is hoarse.

BROCK
Why not?
(shouting)
Why not, damn you? Because he was my son?

STRUAN is standing straight, the fighting-iron hanging by his side.

STRUAN
Perhaps. Or perhaps because he's Tess's brother.

BROCK
What the hell's that to do wi' it?

STRUAN's eyes never leave BROCK's, but the tension has gone out of his body, and when he speaks his voice sounds almost weary.

STRUAN
Tess and Cullum ... our children are man and wife, Brock. If I killed you up here, could I go down and face them? Could you face them, if you'd let me die yesterday? Whatever's between us ...
(he lets his fighting-iron fall to the ground)
... can't be settled with these any longer.
(he smiles at the irony)
We left it too late, Tyler.

129 Continued 129

BROCK is staring at him, speechless, reluctant to be convinced. He glares from STRUAN to the fighting-iron in his own hand, his mouth working, and then all his fury boils out in a great roar.

BROCK
(livid)
You mean you won't fight?

STRUAN
I mean neither of us will.

At that moment a squall of wind hits the hill, catching at their coats, flapping the tails violently so that both men have to brace themselves to balance. CS BROCK, looking for a moment as though he will strike STRUAN to the ground; he swings up the iron and then swings round, preparing to hurl it away when he freezes in mid-action, his head turned. CS of BROCK, the wind full on his face; he glances up. His POV: the weathercock on the newly-completed church close by, clanging and swinging in the squall.

STRUAN
(raising his voice above the wind)
What is it?

BROCK
(still staring up)
Wind's changed.

Both men turn automatically, looking downhill. Their POV: Hong Kong harbour, a great swell heaving the ships at anchor, heeling over the sampans and small craft, spray flying off the breakwater and along the shore. CUT BACK to BROCK and STRUAN staring downhill. The wind moaning.

STRUAN
(voice raised)
It's coming from the north!

They turn again. Their POV: the mainland, slate-grey under lowering clouds which are rolling up the sky towards them.

BROCK
(uneasily)
Maybe a squall ...

STRUAN
Not out of the north!

129 Continued 129

The wind hits the hill with greater force, staggering them. BROCK automatically catches STRUAN's arm; they fight to keep their balance, their faces turned northward into the wind.

BROCK
(hoarsely)
Jesus ... typhoon!

CUT TO

130 EXT. HONG KONG HARBOUR DAY 130

The gale sweeping across the harbour, the tall ships rocking at their moorings, the little ones hurrying for the lee of the breakwater. Sound of the wind rising to a steady shriek. BROCK and STRUAN are running down from the hill as dust-clouds sweep along the beach, a few lighter objects -- screens, baskets, a small hand-cart, being swept or tumbled along by the gale. People hurrying along the beach, being buffeted by the wind, hats and coats flying, small boats being dragged ashore. People making for houses in European township. As BROCK and STRUAN hurry towards the harbour office, the flagpole beside the office is shuddering in the gale, the flag standing out stiff.

CUT TO

131 INT. HARBOUR OFFICE DAY 131

LONGSTAFF, CULLUM, TESS, AND GLESSING in the office. The sound of the wind is abruptly reduced, although it can still be heard moaning and hissing round the eaves, making the timbers creak. LONGSTAFF at the window; GLESSING, with a chart open on the table under his hand, is staring at the barometer on the wall.

GLESSING
(startled)
Twenty-eight point five, sir!
It's dropped four points in half
an hour.

LONGSTAFF
Looks as though we're in for quite
a blow. Good heavens, look at that!

CUT to his POV: LS of the gale-swept harbour, a sampan rushing through the surf and grounding on the beach, her crewmen tumbling into the surf and scrambling ashore, fighting against the wind. CUT to LS of two clippers heaving in the storm under bare poles.

CUT TO

132 EXT. DECK OF TILLMAN'S CLIPPER DAY 132

Spray breaking over the deck. TILLMAN at the wheel with SAILOR, COOPER clutching SHEVAUN as he helps her unsteadily across deck towards companion. She squeals as her bonnet is whipped away; COOPER slips on the skidding deck but manages to bundle her down the companion.

CUT TO

133 EXT. WHITE WITCH DAY 133

CS of White Witch figurehead heaving as waves break over her. LS down deck; GORTH, arm in a sling, is hauling himself up the ladder to the quarter-deck, making a staggering run to the wheel, bellowing inaudibly to the HELMSMAN. CUT to LS of MEN making fast rigging, clinging to rails. LS DOWN-WARD from bow, cable strained taut. CUT to LS of HONG KONG harbour from seaward side, the fury of the wind driving rain in great sheets across sea and shore.

CUT TO

134 EXT. HARBOUR OFFICE DAY 134

MS of STRUAN and BROCK arriving, heads down and staggering against wind, STRUAN reaching for the latch.

CUT TO

135 INT. HARBOUR OFFICE DAY 135

Shriek of wind as door opens,papers blown right and left, STRUAN and BROCK slipping in, slamming door.

STRUAN
Get those shutters closed!
How's the glass?

GLESSING
Lower than I've ever seen it!

CULLUM is closing shutters as BROCK strides to the far window and prepares to close shutters. LONGSTAFF stares in surprise.

LONGSTAFF
What's the matter? The storm --

STRUAN
(at chart table)
Is probably a typhoon.
(glancing at barometer)
Jesus! Cullum -- bolt those shutters and don't let anyone open 'em, d'ye hear?
(calling to Brock)
How long, Tyler?

135 Continued 135

CS of BROCK, shutter in hand, staring grey-faced out of window.

BROCK
Five minutes, mebbe -- and then God help us. There won't be a livin' thing left on the face o' the water!

STRUAN
(straightening up at table)
You're wrong, Tyler. The ships in that harbour'll be safe when every building on land is flattened.
(fixing Longstaff with his eyes)
That's why we came to Hong Kong, remember.

He comes round the table towards BROCK, who turns abruptly away from the window.

BROCK
(hoarsely)
My wife's out there, on White Witch! And Gorth --

He is starting towards the door when STRUAN grips his shoulder.

STRUAN
Gorth's a seaman. He'll drop every hook he's got.

BROCK
(shaking him off)
I'm going to my ship!

LONGSTAFF
(appalled)
Across that harbour --

BROCK
(on his way)
Across helfire if I have to! Tess!
(gesturing to her)
God damn, come on girl!

He is reaching for her wrist, but TESS steps back, pulling her hand away and turning towards CULLUM.

TESS
(shaking her head)
No, Dad!

135 Continued 135

BROCK's face goes livid. Then he understands -- her loyalty is now to her husband, and she will stay with him. CS of BROCK as he hesitates, his face working; then he nods.

BROCK
Aye, lass. Stay wi' your man.
(to Cullum)
Look after her.

He strides to the door, jerks it open and plunges out, dragging it shut behind him. STRUAN moves purposefully towards the door, buttoning his coat.

LONGSTAFF
Brock! Struan, stop him! It's madness! He can't do it!

STRUAN
(grimly)
Never bet on that.
(rapidly, to Cullum)
I'll be at my house. Don't worry, it hasn't started yet. This is just the hurricane -- in a moment, the Devil Winds ... the tai-fung. So when I go through that door, it stays shut -- and you stay flat on the floor, all of you!

He is at the door, opening it a crack. As the wind howls in he motions CULLUM to grip the door. STRUAN slips out, and CULLUM slams the door behind him, GLESSING helping.

CUT TO

136 EXT. HARBOUR OFFICE DAY 136

STRUAN flattened against the office wall, then struggling off into the wind. He manages a run towards the European houses, half-hidden in the sheets of rain sweeping in from the sea. CS of STRUAN battling on. The wind plucks his jacket open, Pulling it off one arm; so lets it go and it swirls away.

CUT TO

137 EXT. THE JETTY DAY 137

A sampan is heaving at her moorings, the wind trying to drive her out into the harbour. Her two CHINESE crewmen cling on, her HELMSMAN is wrestling with her tiller as BROCK hurries down the steps through the driving rain and hurls himself aboard. He yells inaudibly at the HELMSMAN,pointing out to

137 Continued 137

the harbour; when the HELMSMAN yells back in obvious refusal BROCK picks him up bodily, hurls him forward, and grabs the tiller himself. As he slashes with his knife at the mooring line the three CHINESE try to scramble past him out of the heaving boat; he thrusts them back, sending them stumbling towards the sweeps, and as the line parts the sampan lurches away from the jetty, the CHINESE at the sweeps and BROCK at the tiller struggling to control her. She surges away, plunging perilously on the rising waves.

CUT TO

138 EXT. PANORAMIC VIEW HONG KONG HARBOUR DAY 138

The whole sweep of the township, beach, harbour and sea beyond. The harbour lashed by the rain, the two clipper ships heaving and beyond them the ships of the fleet at anchor. Rain almost blots out the beach and township.

CUT TO

139 EXT. CHINESE VILLAGE DAY 139

Some of the hovels have already been destroyed, and CHINESE are stumbling about among the ruins. Most of the houses are still all right, but shaking in the blast, and GORDON CHEN is shouting, pushing, issuing orders in Chinese. He darts to the door of his own house, shouting orders to his CONCUBINE, who is having hysterics. CS of doorway as GORDON slaps her, driving her inside.

CUT TO

140 EXT. EUROPEAN TOWNSHIP DAY 140

LS of houses, STRUAN running through the storm. CS of him pausing, peering through rain. His POV: the REV SINCLAIR, stumbling through the storm. MS of STRUAN catches hold of him, yelling inaudibly. SINCLAIR stumbles and falls, rolls against a tree and pulls himself up, holding on. STRUAN gestures at him to get under cover. Then STRUAN plunges ahead, clinging to the picket fence of his own garden, the fence heaving crazily in the storm.

CUT TO

141 EXT. HONG KONG HARBOUR DAY 141

LS White Witch at her moorings, heaving wildly under a torrent of spray which envelops her like a mist, BROCK's sampan plunging violently as it comes in alongside. CS BROCK, sodden, struggling with the tiller. MS of sampan bucketing under White Witch's side, BROCK and the CHINESE leaping for the clipper's main chains. Two CHINESE fall

141 Continued 141

into sea and are swept away. BROCK and HELMSMAN cling to the chains, dragging themselves up the side of the heaving ship, waves smashing over them. CS as BROCK reaches rail, clings on. VERY CLOSE SHOT as he glances up. His POV: the sky overhead, clouds rolling up towards the zenith at terrific speed as the Supreme Wind strikes with a sound effect that is almost unbelievable, far more terrifying than anything that has gone before. The rain is swept away before it. LS of the ships as the typhoon strikes, rolling and pitching wildly at their cables.

CUT TO

142 EXT. HARBOUR OFFICE DAY 142

LS along beach towards harbour office, the flag-pole bending like a whipstock, shed near office torn away like a matchbox.

CUT TO

143 INT. HARBOUR OFFICE DAY 143

The office shuddering as the typhoon strikes, TESS stumbling and shrieking, CULLUM catching her, forcing her down on floor beside wall, LONGSTAFF falling as the table goes over, GLESSING jumping to a shutter as it slams open, trying to shut it in vain.

CUT TO

144 EXT. STRUAN HOUSE GARDEN DAY 144

STRUAN clinging to a tree, then plunging for the steps, crawling up them, clinging flat on his face to the heaving verandah. NEW ANGLE on STRUAN from house, and beyond him, outside the fence, the distant figure of SINCLAIR clinging to a tree, his arms sliding down it until he is flat on the ground. CS SINCLAIR's face beside tree trunk as it begins to come loose. His mouth opens in a silent scream as the tree-root comes slowly out of the ground. MS SINCLAIR clinging to the tree as he and it are suddenly whirled away. CUT TO STRUAN worming his way into open front doorway, being flung aside as the flying door strikes him, gashing his head. He is half-in, grabbing at the door, managing to heave it shut with his weight.

CUT TO

145 INT. STRUAN HOUSE DAY 145

STRUAN leaning against door, then plunging across to close shutters with a struggle. The noise of the storm is only slightly diminished, but enough for him to be heard yelling 'May-May! May-May!" as he bursts into the outer room, runs across and into the bedroom. A window bursts in, showering

145 Continued 145

fragments of glass and furniture, staggering him. He plunges on, to the bed, which is empty. CS of MAY-MAY huddled in corner. He manages to pull himself to her, covering her with his body, as a wall comes in on him, covering him with debris. She clings to him as he scrambles back with her towards the outer room, the typhoon driving dust and debris through the wreck of the bedroom. He makes it to the outer room doorway, hauls MAY-MAY through, and manages to get the door shut. The shrieking of the typhoon is muffled as he lies exhausted with his back to the door, MAY-MAY clasped to him.

STRUAN
May-May! Are you hurt, lass?

MAY-MAY
(opening her eyes, moaning)
Oh, oh, Tai-pan! No -- no hurt! You all right? Oh dear husband!
(Struan squeezes her to him)
Oh, so bloody frightened! What I tell you? This house built on dragon's neck!

STRUAN
All Hong Kong's built on the dragon's neck!

He kisses her gently, then rises cautiously with her in his arms, glancing round. Outside the typhoon is raging as hard as ever, but in this, the central room of the house, there is comparative peace, although the walls are shuddering, and the closed doors groaning dangerously. He carries her across to a couch in the corner, lays her down tenderly.

STRUAN
(kneeling by couch, arm round her)
Now, you lie still.
(kisses her gently again)
Did you take your medicine ?

MAY-MAY
(slightly dazed)
What? Medicine? Oh, aye --
(grimacing)
Hellish medicine ...

She gives a little shriek as a table in the corner collapses and a vase smashes.

145 Continued 145

MAY-MAY
(clinging to him)
Ayee! Woe, woe, woe!

STRUAN
(smiling)
Wheesht, woman! It'll be over in a wee while. Just be easy.

MAY-MAY
(with sudden spirit)
How be easy with this godrotting storm? You talk awful blethers, Tai-pan! Oh, China! Hate China! You take me home to England soon?

The house shakes more violently than ever with the force of the typhoon. MAY-MAY clings even tighter, her head on STRUAN's breast, as he glances around anxiously. He strokes her head.

STRUAN
(gently)
Three months, lassie. No more. Before Christmas.

CS of their faces together.

CUT TO

146 EXT. HONG KONG HARBOUR DAY 146

PANORAMIC SHOT of harbour, huge waves crashing on beach, a tidal wave surging over the jetty. LS of ships bucking wildly at their moorings. Hideous screaming of wind.

CUT TO

147 EXT. WHITE WITCH DAY 147

LS down deck, huge seas washing over it. MS quarterdeck, BROCK and GORTH clinging to the wheel as the deck pitches crazily under them and a great wave washes over them. GORTH almost swept away, clinging on with his sound arm. BROCK hauls him upright, and they fight to hold the wheel steady.

CUT TO

148 EXT. TILLMAN'S CLIPPER DAY 148

MS of TILLMAN and TWO SEAMEN wrestling with wheel as waves crash over them. CS of her stern cable, taut in the driving spray. A strand parts. LS of clipper heeling almost beam ends over. MS of quarterdeck as she pitches, a SEAMAN washed away. CS of TILLMAN fighting to hold wheel, spray lashing

148 Continued 148

over him, his head suddenly jerking back, his mouth wide in terror. His POV: a great spar descending, falling into CAMERA. LS of quarterdeck, spar and wreckage blotting out the wheel.

CUT TO

149 INT. TILLMAN CLIPPER'S CABIN DAY 149

The cabin tilted at a crazy angle, a cascade of water pitching through the stern window, SHEVAUN and COOPER floundering in it, until he drags her upright, and clings to the bulkhead as furniture goes flying across the cabin. SHEVAUN is shrieking unheard in the fury of the storm. COOPER holds on grimly, the water swirling round his ankles as the ship comes on an even keel again.

CUT TO

150 EXT. CHINESE VILLAGE DAY 150

Shanties and huts swept away in the typhoon, FIGURES rolling and sprawling and being whirled away in the storm of dust and debris. A few buildings still standing, battered by the storm.

CUT TO

151 INT. GORDON CHEN'S HOUSE DAY 151

GORDON dragging up trapdoor as the walls of the house threaten to buckle in. He thrusts weeping CONCUBINE down steps, following nimself with his tin box and lowers trap just as half of wall collapses. CUT INSIDE his cellar, where the noise of the storm is cut off to a sullen thunder. It is comfortably furnished. GORDON snaps in Chinese at the terrified CONCUBINE, carefully sets down his tin box, takes up taper and lights incense bowl, bowing respectfully as he does so.

CUT TO

152 INT. HARBOUR OFFICE DAY 152

The walls shuddering terribly as TESS and CULLUM cling together, flat on the floor. LONGSTAFF and GLESSING are stretched out also, holding on as furniture crashes over and the floor itself seems in danger of coming loose.

CUT TO

153 EXT. HARBOUR OFFICE DAY 153

The flagpole, bent over alarmingly in the gale, its colours flayed to ribbons. Suddenly the pole cracks, falls towards office building.

CUT TO

154 INT. HARBOUR OFFICE DAY 154

The roof splitting as the flagpole crashes down through it. GLESSING right beneath the falling pole. A wall is plucked away beside the corner where TESS and CULLUM are lying. As it whirls away CULLUM buries TESS beneath him, clinging to the corner of the remaining wall. LONGSTAFF, half-covered by debris, tries to crawl towards GLESSING, trapped beneath the pole.

CUT TO

155 EXT. HARBOUR OFFICE DAY 155

LS towards wrecked office, two of its walls gone, the typhoon shrieking through the ruins, furniture hurtling out into CAMERA, the figures of TESS and CULLUM just visible as they cling to the shattered wall.

CUT TO

156 INT. GORDON CHEN'S CELLAR DAY 156

GORDON CHEN reclining tranquilly on a couch, his eyes half-closed. The CONCUBINE kneels by the couch, clinging to his feet, weeping; the sound of the storm overhead. GORDON opens his eyes, glances round in satisfaction, lies back again.

CUT TO

157 EXT. HONG KONG HARBOUR DAY 157

White Witch heaving and bucking at her moorings, BROCK and GORTH in LS clinging to her wheel. The violence of the wind reaches a shrieking climax as we ZOOM up and away from White Witch, to show the tall ships lashed by the typhoon.

CUT TO

158 INT. STRUAN'S HOUSE OUTER ROOM DAY 158

LS across room, STRUAN kneeling by couch, MAY-MAY in his arms, as the typhoon shrieks round the house. CS STRUAN, his hand holding MAY-MAY's head against his breast, her face turning up to look at him.

MAY-MAY
(softly)
Hullo, Tai-pan.

STRUAN
(in a whisper)
Hullo, May-May.

MAY-MAY
(solemnly)
You sure you want marry your old Chinese woman? Sure you no want barbarian wife with big buzzums?

158 Continued 158

STRUAN
(smiling)
I'm sure ...
(kissing her gently)
... Supreme Lady.

MAY-MAY sighs contentedly and nestles against him. CS STRUAN as he looks up from her, his face setting grimly, eyes narrowing. His POV: the hall door, creaking and moving under the strain. CS STRUAN as the shrieking of the wind outside seems to reach a terrifying pitch, the walls creaking and shuddering alarmingly. MAY-MAY huddles closer to him, turning up her face again towards him. He glances down at her.

STRUAN
(quietly)
Don't be frightened, lassie.

MAY-MAY
No feared, husband.

She kisses him, and he folds her face down against his shoulder, stroking her head. CUT to CS of the creaking door, then to CS of STRUAN. His head lifts a little, his eyes steady as he watches the door. CS of door bursting in with a hellish scream. BRIEF CS of STRUAN. CUT to BLACK SCREEN and dead silence.

159 EXT. HONG KONG HARBOUR AND BEACH DAY 159

The BLACK SCREEN lightens slowly, objects gradually coming into view. First the shore-line, seen from the sea, rolling waves breaking gently on a beach strewn with the wreckage of small craft. PAN from beach to half-wrecked buildings in the European township, a few buildings still standing, the first sight of PEOPLE starting to emerge, dazed, from the rubble, a few fires smouldering, part of the township flooded. CONTINUE PAN to jetty and ruins of harbour office, two walls hanging shakily over a pile of debris. CULLUM is on his feet, his arm round TESS's shoulders as she kneels beside him. CULLUM, stunned, stares round as LONGSTAFF stumbles up beside him. CONTINUE PAN to jetty, a SEAMAN scrambling up to stare appalled at the smashed small boats drifting by the jetty. CONTINUE PAN over the harbour, the battered tall ships riding at their moorings on the swell. The sky is clear, the sun is breaking through.

CUT TO

160 EXT. WHITE WITCH DAY 160

LS with shattered witch figurehead in FG of wreck-strewn deck of the clipper, BROCK in BG coming slowly forward to his quarterdeck rail. CS BROCK, bewildered as he surveys the harbour, pushing a hand through his sodden hair. Behind him GORTH leans half-exhausted against the wheel.

160 Continued 160

BROCK
(in a hoarse whisper)
The ships! They're still here!
Safe! We rode it out!

His POV: the harbour, with the tall ships with their bare poles riding the wreck-strewn water, the devastated beach beyond.

CUT TO

161 EXT. HARBOUR OFFICE AND JETTY DAY 161

LS towards ruined office, a few figures moving uncertainly near it and on the jetty in BG. Sounds of female sobbing, a man moaning in pain. CULLUM is helping TESS out of the ruins, a couple of MARINES, stumbling among the debris, are trying to help the unconscious GLESSING. Farther off two MEN are carrying an injured WOMAN, and a MAN sits with his head in his hands. V.O. shouting: "Surgeon! Get a surgeon!" In FG LONGSTAFF is moving out of ruins like a man in a dream. More V.O.s: "Oh, my God ...!" "Where's John? John!" "Lend a hand here -- there's someone buried ..." CS of LONGSTAFF, face bewildered, lips shaking, as he stares about in shock. At the sharp sound of a child crying he turns his head. His POV: a BOY of about four, sobbing, stumbling over rubble, running towards LONGSTAFF, reaching out to him. CS LONGSTAFF registering him. MS as he absently takes the child's hand.

CUT TO

162 EXT. CHINESE VILLAGE DAY 162

Devastation of ruined huts, wailing and chattering as people scramble out of the debris. GORDON CHEN is staring round as he moves along street. There is a sense of reawakening, a stunned population coming back to life, here and ...

CUT TO

163 EXT. EUROPEAN TOWNSHIP DAY 163

... among the ruins of the European town, where PEOPLE are stumbling about, MARINES and SEAMEN heaving away debris: V.O.s: "The house has gone -- the whole town's gone!" "Get a stretcher, can't you?" "Edith! Edith, oh thank God!" "This way, marines, at the double!" Some people shattered, zombie-like, others embracing, some lying injured, another group beginning to sing "Oh, God our help in ages past", some of them kneeling. One house lies almost intact, but upside down. Shouting of orders. COLONEL STANLEY, looking like a battered scarecrow, is hurrying through the scene; PAN with him as he comes up to LONGSTAFF, who is still standing shocked, holding the SMALL BOY's hand. Behind him the unconscious GLESSING is being carried away on a stretcher.

163 Continued 163

STANLEY
(breathless)
Thank Heaven you're safe, sir! God alone knows how many are dead -- we can't tell until we've searched the ruins, you see. I've ordered field kitchens set up, and water parties. Are you all right, sir?

LONGSTAFF
(still dazed, looking round)
The flagpole's gone. We shall need a new one.
(becomes aware of Small Boy)
Who are you? Eh?
(passes a hand over his brow, recovering)
I'm sorry, Stanley. A little dazed. Yes, search-parties ... and a field hospital for the injured.
(bracing himself)
I shall make my head-quarters by the jetty for the moment. Have the officers report to me there.
(is setting off decisively when he remembers the Small Boy and turns back, gesturing him)
You, sir ... come with me directly.

The BOY hurries after him, taking LONGSTAFF's hand again as the Governor strides off towards the jetty.

CUT TO

164 EXT. EUROPEAN TOWNSHIP DAY 164

MARINES and CIVILIANS searching the ruined houses, hurling timbers aside, lifting out bodies. CULLUM thrusting his way towards where MEN are heaving aside debris of STRUAN's house. UPWARD SHOT from beneath rubble as planks and debris are torn aside, faces of MARINE, CIVILIAN, and COOLIE staring down. Their POV: bodies of STRUAN and MAY-MAY, half-buried, recognisable only by their clothes. STRUAN's head is under rocks, MAY-MAY half-underneath him clasped in his arms. MARINE kneels beside them. CUT to CULLUM hurrying up, halting among the group round the MARINE, staring. MARINE looks up, shakes head. CS of CULLUM, the colour draining from his face.

CUT TO

165/171 DELETED 165/171

172 EXT. HARBOUR OFFICE AND JETTY AREA DAY 172

The bustle has become more orderly. COOLIES are clearing away debris, CIVILIANS and MARINES moving purposefully, SEAMEN erecting a large tent with an awning beneath which a table has been set up for LONGSTAFF, who is seated, STANLEY standing at his elbow. Officers are reporting and receiving orders. Various groups of CIVILIANS are gathered near the HQ tent and the jetty, where small boats are coming in from the harbour ships. BROCK and GORTH are coming briskly up the jetty steps from one of these boats, making for a group where COOPER is seated on a barrel having his arm bound by the CHINESE DOCTOR. Nearby a bedraggled SHEVAUN is being fussed over by a WOMAN with smelling-salts. BROCK and GORTH are talking to COOPER. CUT to CS BROCK.

BROCK
(in disbelief)
He's dead? By God!
(glancing at Gorth)
By God.

GORTH nudges him and nods. Their POV: CULLUM is approaching LONGSTAFF's table. LONGSTAFF is issuing orders to an OFFICER

LONGSTAFF
... and have the surgeon send one of his orderlies to the Chinese village immediately ... see what the damage is there ....

As the OFFICER salutes and goes off, LONGSTAFF comes to his feet with an expression of deep concern for CULLUM.

LONGSTAFF
(continued)
My dear boy! What can I say?
(wringing Cullum's hand)
A tragic loss -- tragic. I shall feel it not only in my official capacity, but as a close friend. My deepest sympathy ... God's will be done ...

CULLUM
Thank you, Excellency

LONGSTAFF
(sitting down)
Now, where was I? Ah, yes -- in the present emergency, since the

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LONGSTAFF (Cont)
Noble House employed by far the largest work force on the island, I have empowered Colonel Stanley to make such use of your labourers and the Company's resources as he may require. Purely for the time being, of course. You've no objection?

CULLUM
(shaken and tired)
No ... no, sir, of course not.

LONGSTAFF
Good. Stanley will see to it. Now, I suggest you go and rest - I'll send for you if I need you.
(calling)
Wilson, find me the harbour-master ...

STANLEY
(briskly)
My condolences, Struan.

He shakes hands, turns to take papers from a MESSENGER. CULLUM, finding himself dismissed, turns away. A CIVILIAN comes up, presses his hand, another pats him on the shoulder, there are sympathetic murmurs as he moves away. COOPER comes to shake his hand.

COOPER
I'm sorry, Cullum. He was a great man. If there's anything I can do ...

CULLUM
Thank you.

COOPER
(awkwardly)
At least - at least he didn't live to see the end of his dream.

For a moment CULLUM doesn't understand. Then his POV: the devastation of beach and township, a mass of wreckage and shattered houses, with the clearing gangs at work. He nods slowly and walks on.

CUT TO:

173 EXT. EUROPEAN TOWNSHIP DAY 173

CULLUM, tired, bewildered, and uncertain, walking alone. Rescue work continues in BG. CULLUM stops; his POV: BROCK, standing alone, considering him.

BROCK
(slowly)
I'm sorry, lad. We were shipmates ... once.
(more briskly)
Don't worry - I'll see to everything. I've told Orlov to fly your flag at half-mast; I've been to your Dad's house, an' seen him laid out right - wi' that Chinese woman well out o' the way. We'll bury him out yonder, in salt water - that's proper for a seaman.
(handing over Struan's bible)
They found this among the ruins - you'd best have it.

CULLUM
(taking it)
Thank you, Mr Brock.

BROCK
I've sent Tess aboard White Witch, wi' her mother. All's well, lad - you're one o' the family now. An' soon we'll be partners - Brock an' Struan. I'll see the papers drawn up, an' that'll be that. Now - get yoursel' aboard White Witch, an' look after Tess.

CULLUM
Yes ... of course, Mr Brock. It's very good of you ... but if you don't mind I'd like to be alone for a little, first.

BROCK
(nodding)
Aye, well, be aboard by sunset.

He claps CULLUM's arm, not unkindly, looks after the young man walking away. Already BROCK sees himself as Tai-Pan.

CUT TO:

174 EXT. HONG KONG BEACH DAY 174

CULLUM, alone, is sitting on a rock, the Bible in his hands. CS of it as he opens it: two broken blobs of sealing-wax where two of the half-coins were, and the third half-coin still stuck in place. CS of CULLUM looking at it, then closing the cover, glancing up. GORDON CHEN is standing a few yards away. He bows; when he straightens there are tears in his eyes.

GORDON
I have burned joss for our father - and for the death of the Noble House. But I obey him still, and what you ask me to do, I shall do.

CULLUM
(nodding vaguely)
Thank you, Gordon.

GORDON, bows, moves off a little way. CS of GORDON drawing a third half-coin from his sleeve, looking at it, putting it away again, for another day. CUT to QUANCE approaching, bedraggled.

CULLUM
(listlessly)
Hello, Mr Quance. Are you all right?

QUANCE
(unhappily)
In body, yes. In spirit ...
(shakes his head)
I hate ... I mean, I don't wish to be inopportune at such a time, but -

CULLUM
(wearily)
Perhaps some other time.

QUANCE
(miserably)
I'm so sorry - but you see, my house has gone ... everything. I was wondering - just temporarily, you understand, if you could lend me ten pounds, Tai-pan?

CULLUM
(bewildered)
What?

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QUANCE
Just ten pounds, for -

CULLUM
Did you call me Tai-pan?

QUANCE
(uncertainly)
Well ... yes ... you are, aren't you?

CULLUM
I'm afraid not. The Noble House has no Tai-pan now.
(Glancing along the beach)
As somebody said, at least he was lucky that he didn't see the end of his dream.

QUANCE
Oh? I don't quite follow ...

CULLUM gestures at the wrecked township.

CULLUM
Not much of the Noble House left, is there. All of the trading houses together won't salvage much from that, will they? I don't know ...
(With a ghost of a smile)
But I think I can run to ten pounds.

QUANCE
(looking along the beach)
Oh ... I see. Oh ... but I wasn't looking at that. I ... well, I'm only an artist, of course, but I was looking out there.
(He indicates the harbour and Cullum looks with him)
Don't you see?

CUT to their POV: the ships at their moorings in the great sweep of the harbour.

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QUANCE (V.O)
The tall ships - still there. The worst typhoon in history hit Hong Kong, and the fleet came through it, unharmed. Only one vessel aground. The safest anchorage in the Orient, your father called it... that's why he wanted it, and fought for it. A stepping-stone to empire in the China Sea, that's what he used to say. A town's nothing - it can be rebuilt, with stone instead of wood. But a safe haven, where the fleets of all the world could lie secure - that's everything!

CUT to LS of CULLUM sitting, QUANCE beside him, GORDON CHEN at a little distance. From farther off, where there are people on the beach, and near the township, two figures are approaching, one (ORLOV) some way ahead of the other. CUT to ORLOV approaching.

ORLOV
(coming up, breathing hard)
Brock sent orders aboard my ship. To lower the colours, for your father. - I'd ha' done it anyway, but I want to know: do I take orders from Brock?

CULLUM looks at him for a moment without replying, and ORLOV is about to speak again when the second figure, a young MIDSHIPMAN, arrives.

MIDSHIPMAN
The Governor wishes to see you at his head-quarters.

CULLUM
(quietly)
Please tell him I'll see him as soon as possible.

MIDSHIPMAN
(frowning)
He said at once.

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CULLUM
(a little more sharply)
Tell him I'm busy. And inform Colonel Stanley that before he employs any workers of the Noble House he will come and see me.

The MIDSHIPMAN gapes, hesitates, and goes off. CULLUM turns his head sharply.

(calling)
Gordon!

(Gordon comes quickly forward)
You'll make arrangements to have my father buried on the hill - with May-May beside him.

(to Orlov)
Go aboard White Witch, and bring my wife ashore. Then get thirty pounds from my clerk. Ten are for Mr Quance. Take the other twenty to Mr Brock with my compliments. Tell him I said to buy himself a coffin.

ORLOV
(awed for once)
Aye, aye, s- ... yes, Tai-pan.

He goes off with QUANCE. CULLUM and GORDON are left standing together on the beach. MS of them together, CULLUM in front, looking out to sea, GORDON to the side and a little back. Suddenly ZOOM UP and away from them to an enormous height, the SHOT taking in Hong Kong as it is today, the entire island with its buildings in the sunlight, the shipping around it, the Kowloon shore, and the Chinese mainland in the distance.

END TITLES